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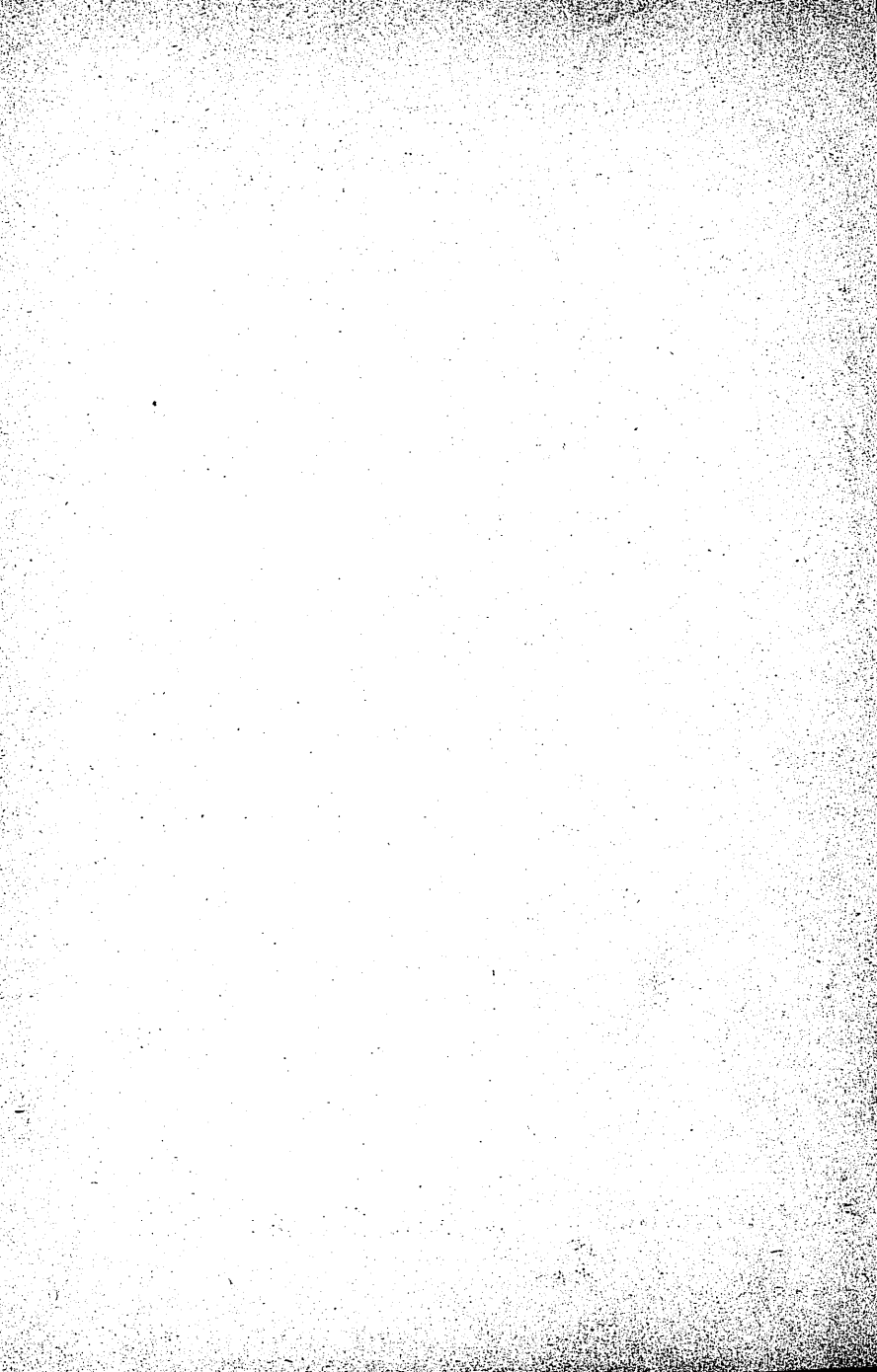
A

Book for "Blue Monday."

By Rev. Frank J. Mallett, B. D.

NEW YORK:
THE CHURCH PUBLISHING CO.,
281 Fourth Avenue.

LONDON:
THOMAS BAKER
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Errata.

- Page 12 In quotation from *Sidney Smith*, 3rd line from top, omit "not" and read "he best served." In 6th line insert "but" and read "but the luxury of false religion."
- Page 21 Read "buoyant" instead of "bouyant," line 11 from bottom.
- Page 32 Omit "to" in 3rd line from bottom.
- Page 36 Line 8, from top, read "apostle instead of "opostle."
- Page 71 Line 15 from top, read "weighty" instead of "weight."
- Page 72 Line 12 from bottom read "break" instead of "breck."
- Page 74 Line 6 from bottom read "wit" instead of "with."
- Page 76 Line 6 from top read "to" instead of "at."
- Page 101 Line 8 from top read "serious" instead of "seriousness."
- Page 152 Line 6 from bottom read "of all" instead of "all of"
- Page 209 Line 3 from top read "bless" instead of "bet."



TO
MY WIFE:
MARY E. MALLETT,
IS THIS VOLUME AFFECTIONATELY
DEDICATED.





Preface.

WIT and humor having won for themselves a definite and honorable place in literature by the side of poetry, fiction and the drama, it is scarcely necessary to apologize for a modest work on the specific theme considered herein—the wit of priest and preacher.

While of making many books there is no end, we found for our encouragement, when contemplating our present task, that the market did not appear to be “glutted” with books on the exact theme we intend to pursue, for while the witty sayings and jokes of certain clerics had in some cases been collected, yet seemingly no attempt had been made to string together such jewels in some sort of order so as to produce a work strictly on *clerical humor*.

It had not entered into the heart of man—at any rate not into the heart of a *clergyman* to “set in order” either the clerical wit of the past or some sort of rational *defense* of “the merry saints”—the witty priests of our own, or other days.

Besides expressing our own views on popular misconceptions as to what “a minister ought

to be," and our notions as to the humorous side of the priestly character, we trust that the mine we have "worked" in a somewhat neglected, or unthought-of "claim" in literature, will afford the indulgent reader as much enjoyment as it did the writer, whose pleasant task it has been to "prospect" and "work" amid the rich deposits that were found—for the searching.

It has been our aim, in sampling the wit of our lively clerics, to focus in certain chapters the bright rays of "ministerial sunshine," and so to beguile or enliven the tedium or mental depression of an occasional dull half hour, for ministers and laymen alike have their "blue days."

Many of the jests here chronicled or brought to light fell from the lips of pure and noble men, who in their day were rightly styled "good fellows;" and so, after ventilating our own ideas somewhat, we have purposely made way for the clerical jokers who have been made to tell their own tales and crack their own jokes in their own language, and in their own inimitable way.

Certainly no apology is needed on *their* behalf, for, judged by the truest standards, comparing the wit and humor of "yesterday" with that of "today" we may assert without fear of contradiction that "the old is better." Quite recently a London church paper said with more truth than flattery, "One wonders what our jokers, and comedians, and song-writers have been about since last season, that they have produced noth-

ing new, let alone funny." This is "strong language," but true. As with secular, so with clerical wit. It is perfectly safe to say that such criticisms are just, and that stars of the first magnitude in the realms of wit belong to other days than ours.

If this be so, it can do the "moderns" no harm to study the wits of the past, and this may aid us in the cultivation of the art—the pleasing art of being gay and witty—which will result in making the world brighter and better; for let us be well assured, that just as long as human nature remains what it is, people will enjoy the joke, the witticism, and the innocent laugh.

Besides, ministers, like all students and book-worms, are specially liable to a peculiar melancholy, hard to describe and label, but nevertheless most real, and the parishioners who suggest the annual vacation for their overworked clergyman are sensible people, especially if some of the wealthier ones offer a yacht for a cruise, or a "trip abroad." The much abused summer vacation is a necessity, and a few weeks at the seaside, or in the mountains, is rightly getting to be a necessity. "The gospel of relaxation" is being preached by the laity; the clergy must harp on the same string.

But how is the minister of modest income to "relax,"—to recreate? He too works hard; he is "run down," nervous, depressed. He is possessed with the "blue demon"—*melancholia*. Perhaps

he does not even possess a bicycle. What shall this man do? Is there no inexpensive way of cheering this good brother? Can nothing be done for this man? Let him hie away to the author of "The Anatomy of Melancholy" who, says the great Democritus, when *he* was wearied and melancholy with overmuch study, used to go in the evening to the haven and there divert himself by listening to the babble of the barge-men and fishwives. Yes, the founder of "the Atomic Theory" has left on record the curious fact—would that we might heed it—that the *greater nonsense* these simple people talked—the more delighted was he. What a moral the average parson can draw from that. *Nonsense!* Ah! this then is the specific for melancholy for the rich person and the poor, be he priest or layman.

"All work and no play
Makes Jack a dull boy."

The "tension" of these days affects even the "slow going parson," if such a survival still exists. So far as our experience goes, the verdict that might be put on the tomb of many a parson would read:

"Here lies a clergyman—who died through living in a
rush."

Time must be *made* for innocent diversion, exercise—change. In a word, clergymen should laugh more—it is good for soul and body, for contact with saint or sinner. Unbending a little, like

Democritus. will not only tend to make the parson popular—but will prolong his life. If then many ministers are deprived of “expensive” pleasures, is it not the more incumbent on them to seize the pleasures that are open to all?

The modern minister should see to it that he has among his more ponderous tomes *the book of wit*, not to be hidden in a napkin, or conned on the sly. It should be thumbed a little every day, as it is just as legitimate as the New Testament in Greek. We need to be repeatedly told that books that make men laugh have a divine element within them, and certainly perform most blessed service—they are on a mission of love.

The layman has for ages laughed at the parson’s “blue Monday;” he has also ridiculed the “ministerial melancholy” that has won so many *female* hearts. But the days of emancipation are at hand. The “coming priest” or preacher will be different from his predecessors,—he is “evolving” into it already, and one thing he is going to do is to bury that “abnormal melancholy,” the disease or malady that the Emperor of China’s physician stated recently was “killing” his royal patient. Yes, the coming minister or priest will laugh so loud, that he will literally overwhelm that “layman’s libel” in *waves of laughter*.

Frank J. Mallett.

Beloit, Wis., September, 1899.

Chapter I.

Clergymen not as Destitute of Wit as Some Imagine.

"I endeavor to give my parishioners more cheerful ideas of religion, to teach them that God is not a jealous, childish, merciless tyrant, that he is not best served by a regular tenor of good actions,—not by bad singing, ill-composed prayers, and eternal apprehensions; the luxury of false religion is, to be unhappy."—*Sydney Smith.*

THERE are certain fallacies that seem to enjoy perpetual youth. Some of these should, in the proper order of things, show signs of decrepitude and decay, but alas! they survive and even flourish. Though repeatedly attacked by argument, ridicule, or contempt,

"Men may come, and men may go,
But they go on for ever."

One of the most popular fallacies is, that the parson must somehow be a man abnormally serious, or sad,—rarely, if ever, gay. Who in everyday life expects "the average parson" to be witty or even merry? Who expects to find jollity, mirth, or wit in him who is styled "a legate of the skies?"

Multitudes of people, and not necessarily of the "goody, goody" sort either, honestly think

that a clergyman must, by some means, be so "constructed" as to leave no shred of wit or humor in his "make-up." Others who have found that clerical wit exists, think he should ruthlessly suppress, or guiltily hide, such a questionable or dangerous gift, hide it far from the eyes of the saints. Only a few people seem to look at this matter in a common-sense way, and as they find that, in spite of the over-pious people, an occasional clerical wit has flashed his genius upon the age or country in which he lived, admit that those men and the priest of to-day *might be pious and laugh.*

It is certain that the people described by Sydney Smith at the head of this chapter,—the people who find it a luxury to be unhappy,—have generation after generation slighted and ignored the clerical wit. Yes, the over-righteous people have by their indifference often thrown into oblivion many bright and beautiful thoughts, simply because they were "sugar-coated" with wit or evoked amid peals of laughter; and because they think "tears are more sacred than smiles."

Surely the time for our emancipation has come, and if it be true that we live in a tolerant and enlightened age, it must soon come to pass that the clerical wit shall not be looked upon as a sort of malformation, a monstrosity, a paradox, or a "queer combination."

Until that "good time" comes we must continue to remind people that in hugging the fallacy

that clerical wits are abnormally constituted they are placing themselves in opposition to the innate laws of the human mind, for, as Whipple truly says, "Mirth is as innate in the mind as any other faculty, and the absence of it in individuals, or communities, *is a defect*." Now, all "well-regulated" congregations in the United States, as well as those throughout the British Empire, will unhesitatingly affirm that they want no "defects" in *their* minister,—no, not one. He must be absolutely perfect. The average congregation wants an angel for their pastor, though *they* might look bad by contrast. The wide-awake layman who "runs the church" demands at the time of a vacancy in the pastorate that the new man shall possess what he calls "personal magnetism." The incumbent must have it not only in the pulpit, but out, and yet the same keen layman, with strange inconsistency sometimes, would have the parson suppress the very elements that oftentimes make "the magnetizing business" a success; for who can deny the magnetic quality of wit and humor?

The fact is that the public mind, the *religious* public mind, has conjured up for itself an ideal parson, who, when true to the standard, is devoid of most things, save a *long face*; a clerical collar, pretty high at the front, and so many yards of clerical broad-cloth often constitute the ideal parson. The people seem to be demanding, for parsons, men like the guards of Libby Prison who Chaplain McCabe says (from personal experi-

ence) seemed ever afraid to laugh in presence of the "Yankees" lest their faces should crack.

If one thinks for a moment, recalling the every-day sayings familiar to us all concerning the qualifications and pre-requisites of the parson, he will find how much misconception has been bequeathed to us from the past. For instance, if I have a young man in my congregation the least serious in deportment, or even decently religious, somebody is sure to ask me "whether So-and-So is not thinking of the ministry;" it's the *serious* aspect that tells the story. Living in a college town we sometimes come across a student who knows something besides the latest sporting news, or the last athletic "record breaker." He is actually a *studious* student. In such a case as this society shakes its head, and in a contradictory and inconsistent way says, "That young man is too serious; *he is as solemn as a parson.*" And when a man becomes a nuisance in a drawing room, by reason of his "foolish prating," what will "settle" him quicker than the old platitude, "*your talk is as dry as a sermon*"?

Some time since a certain clergyman, who shall be nameless, was invited to respond to a toast at a medical men's banquet. The committee, evidently desirous of pleasing him, and showing their respect for the cloth in the "orthodox" fashion, handed him the following dismal lines from Spenser's Faery Queen.

"Right faithful true he was in deed and word.

But of his cheere did seem too solemn, sad."

There one can see not only the medical men's estimate of the average parson, but also that of a great multitude that no man can number.

Happily we live in a land where all classes respect and even love the clerical profession. The American public admit willingly and gladly that their clergymen possess in a marked degree the religious character, together with more or less intellectuality, but have they got beyond the doctors' conception,—"*His cheere did seem too solemn, sad*"? The brilliant Thackeray in a lecture on "*Charity and Humor*" styles the English humorists "weekday preachers," and enumerates in the list not only the *laymen* Congreve, Addison, Steele, Gay, and Hogarth, but also the clerics Dean Swift and Parson Sterne.

Thackeray rightly exalts those real benefactors—the "gay and kind weekday preachers,"—and continuing, says, "that same theme which is urged upon you by the eloquence and example of good men to whom you are delighted listeners on Sundays, is taught, in his way, and according to his powers, by the humorous writer, the commentator on every day life and manners."

Too nice or fine distinctions should not be rashly drawn between the clergyman and the layman, for certainly the lay mind cannot claim a monopoly of wit and humor, not if they pertain to brain or heart. Being made of the same common clay, preachers must perforce possess at least a

share of the gifts of our common heritage.

It is a fact, forgotten by some, that in almost every other intellectual field clergymen have reaped the reward and shared the honors with those who have won distinction. From the ranks of the ministry have sprung men of whom intellectually we are justly proud. As poets we have had a Herbert, a Crabbe, a Barham, and in later days a Keble, a Lyte, a Coxe.

There have been parson-novelists not a few. Who can forget the debt we owe to such men as Kingsley, Macdonald, Baring-Gould, E. P. Roe, Ian McLaren, Silas Hocking and Crockett? Turn where you will, you find creditable evidences of the work of the parson. Science, philosophy, art, education,—to say nothing of their specialty, theology,—all have been enriched with the wealth of their genius, research and learning. Why then should it be thought a thing incredible that from their ranks should spring those who should be gifted with the specific and subtle power of brightening their own thought and that of the world with innocent forms of pleasantry, drollery, or ridicule? Happily there is abundant evidence to show that there *have* been clerical jokers, (not ephemeral “funny men”) who never sullied their blade with coarse or profane jests, and we may hope that others will arise to whom will fall the pleasing task of making this bad world better, and this dark world brighter, for,

“Not in vain hath he lived whose beneficent mirth

Hath lightened the frowns and the furrows of earth."

The witty priests and merry preachers whose acquaintance will be either renewed, or formed for the first time within these pages, were men who did their life-work better for the mirth and jollity they possessed and cultivated. And certainly it will do nobody any harm to come in contact with their sunny spirits, for we *may* be led by them to a better conception of our duty towards God and our neighbor. Cheerfulness and good nature ever tend in the right direction, and the man who lifts the burden of care from a human being, though it be for the moment only, and while the laugh lingers, is acting charitably.

Chapter II.

The Use and Abuse of Clerical Wit.

"Do not be all sugar, or the world will suck you down; but do not be all-vinegar, or the world will spit you out. There is a medium in all things."—*Charles H. Spurgeon.*

A TRUE conception of the dignity of a clergyman's high calling should ever prevent the rightly balanced from indulgence in vulgar, profane, or idiotic witticisms and jests. The best type of clerical wit is never a buffoon

"Who courts a grin
When he should save a soul."

It must be reluctantly admitted, however, that occasionally even a preacher has been known to so far fall from grace as to be guilty of this, the most distressing form of irreverence. It is not long since that a public lecturer, and he a layman, publicly declared that he could never shake off the doubtful influence of certain stories and witticisms of a certain minister into whose home he used to enter in his youth. Such things ought not so to be. How men can profane holy

texts, or "pun" upon holy Scripture, or indulge in dubious stories, will remain a mystery to the priest or preacher who has right instincts. Fancy a preacher of the Gospel, preaching on "Hell," deliberately pulling a match out of his pocket, and striking it on the pulpit,—delivering his message with the unction of *fire and brimstone* before the eyes of the congregation! Yet this was done by a certain pioneer evangelist in this Western Land. Or imagine the scene when a Scotch clergyman, with an *apostolic surname*, being called *Hamilton Paul*, having more ready wit than common sense, and being a past-master in the art of preaching from peculiar texts, on leaving a certain parish where he was known to have been a favorite with the fair sex, took for his text: "And they all wept sore, and fell upon *Paul's neck*, and *kissed him*." Preaching to a military company, whose uniforms were *green*, this same "buffoon" chose for his text: "And I beheld men, like trees walking." That significant color represented a *good deal more* than he either thought of or proclaimed.

Here is a little piece of reprehensible yet so-called "up to-date advertising" of "taking subjects" from the "*Chester Times*" correspondent at Sharon Hill, Penna.: Rev. J. H.—***, pastor of the *** Church, preached the first of a series of sermons on Sunday evening on "*Strange Biblical Subjects*," his theme being "*Only, Half Baked*." The next subjects will be, "*A Speaking*

Donkey," "A Bag With Holes," "Sun-dried Skeletons Equipped for War."

In this connection the stern, strong words of the late Phillips Brooks are worthy of consideration. He says truly: "There are passages of the Bible that are soiled forever by the touches of the hands of ministers who delight in the cheap jokes they have left behind them." Ministers who thus transgress the law of good taste, and revel in such irreverences, probably missed their vocation. They should have been end-men at a minstrel show, or clowns at a circus.

The witty priests and merry preachers who will serve to illustrate our theme were not guilty of irreverence or profanity; they were ministers first, wits afterwards.

Some of them might, as the politicians say, have gone into the business of making people laugh "for all that's in it," but they were not "hired jesters," nor "court fools." While the brilliant Dean Swift, or bouyant and cultivated Sydney Smith, were the equals of Addison, or Congreve, they did not crack jokes, or coin elegant *bonmots* for hard cash; they reveled in wit for wit's sake. Our good natured clerical jokers, like Him "whose they were, and whom they served," shed their spontaneous wit and humor on all around, just as we read of God himself that he "sendeth rain on the just and the unjust." The world was better, richer, happier, for their jokes and quaint conceits, and who is he who will

impugn their motives, or assert that they were huge inconsistencies?

George Herbert, of whom Emerson says "there was never so much piety married to so much wit," was indeed a great saint, but withal a *laughing* saint, a merry saint. He says: "Nature will not bear everlasting droopings, and merry pleasantness of disposition is a great key to do good."

To "do good,"—that is the life-text from which every true minister is daily preaching by his outward acts and words. His recreations, his ambitions, all centre around that divine desire, so that like his Master he may "go about doing good." Daily cheerfulness is one of the richest possessions that any man can have, be he priest or layman.

But the parson, often *oppressed* and *depressed* with weighty responsibilities, public and private, brought into daily and almost hourly contact with different forms of human sorrow, that call for sympathy, finds it hard, very hard, to manifest that scriptural cheerfulness, that "doeth good like a medicine." The parson is after all only a mortal, and his environment affects his spirits day by day. What is he to do about it? Is he to settle down with a sort of feeling that this "melancholy" is the price he has to pay for "the priestly dignities?" Is he to endure this sort of thing to the end—that he may be saved? Or amid the worry and turmoil of life should he

"take" Mr. Depew's "remedy" and *find something to laugh at*—"to drive the cobwebs out of the brain?" *Cobwebs!* Ah! The layman admits that such things find a place in his brain. Does the clergyman? There *may* be something like that in some parsonic heads,—at any rate there used to be in days gone by, when it was said of certain ministers who were great scholars at the head of American Colleges that "*they were invisible all the week, and incomprehensible on Sunday.*"

What man is he who in the rush of ministerial life today cannot voice the sentiments of the gentleman just alluded to? Says Mr. Depew: "I have always been under a good deal of pressure; I have for many years been subject daily to all sorts of worries. When a young man, I saw that I must forget these things at night if I wished to be fresh and rested the next day. Experiment showed that I could force them from my mind by substitution, and in no other way. Hence my jokes and stories."

Ministers should remember that they must either *bend* or *break*. They must bend in good, honest laughter and forgetfulness of the sterner things of life, or break physically and mentally under the never ceasing cares of their modern life-strain. (*) Only a few men are so saintly that

(*) Overwork, like Death, loves a shining mark, as, for example, Dr. Gunsaulus. He made a brave struggle to conquer his physical ailments, but in vain, and now he and his great Chicago church have both accepted the inevitable. He has been plainly overdoing for years; *ergo*, in the prime of life and with shining prospects, he must retire into indefinite invalidism. There is a text here from which a

they do not occasionally get what the layman calls "peppery," peevish, or glum, "out of sorts" physically and mentally. The remedy for these attacks, which come on periodically, especially after certain church or parish meetings, is to get with good natured people who know how to laugh loud and long; then, in spite of the elegant Lord Chesterfield's dictum that "it makes one ugly to laugh,"—*laugh*, and try your hand at making others do likewise. (†)

Life has two ecstatic moments they say, one when the spirit comes in contact with truth, the other when we recognize anywhere a *kindred spirit*. These kindred spirits are all around life's pathway, and at any rate we can seek companion-

multitude of busy ministers might preach to themselves a cogent twenty minutes' sermon.—*Church Economist*.

(†) That laughter is popularly believed to be beneficial is evidenced by the old proverb, "Laugh and grow fat." But merriment may cure many other things besides *leanness*, so we are told by Dr. D'Aiutolo, an Italian physician, who has just seriously discussed the action of laughter as an expectorant, in a paper before the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Bologna. The general subject is reviewed in a brief notice in *The British Medical Journal* as follows:

"Therapeutic effects of different kinds have been attributed to laughter by the gravest medical writers from Hippocrates downward. The Father of Medicine laid special stress on the importance of merriment at meals. The old physicians recommended laughter as a powerful means of 'desopilating' the spleen. Fonssagrives said that mirth is the most powerful lever of health. Tissot professes to have cured scrofulous children by tickling and making them laugh. Dumont de Monteaux relates the strange case of a gentleman who got rid of an intermittent fever after witnessing a performance of 'Le Mariage de Figaro,' at which he had laughed consummately. Other learned doctors state that nephthritic colic, scurvy, pleurisy, and other affections are favorably influenced by laughter."—*Literary Digest*.

ship with "the past." To bridge the gulf that separates the "past" from the "present," to come in any sense in contact with *our* kindred spirit,—this is a real delight. "The thoughts they had were the parents of the actions they did; their feelings were parents of their thoughts." And what scintillating, witty thoughts our clerical humorists evolved! What generous feelings parents of those thoughts were theirs!

Surely no man will depreciate, or begrudge them their just title,—“every-day preachers,”—men whose words not only made men *laugh*, but cheered them in life's battle. Nor should it be forgotten that their words became common property, and often like the zephyrs were wafted far and wide for the enjoyment of thousands who never had the privilege of direct intercourse with the originator of a jest or a *bonmot*. It is to this sort of thing that we ourselves are indebted for many enjoyable sayings that are still perennial. And were it not for this traditional “handing down” process, a good many of the brightest jewels would have perished, for our clerical wits did not write jokes by the score for bread and butter, nor did they, like the professional humorists of our times, “grind out” witticisms by the ream for “copy.” The originator of a merry jest has frequently remained unknown, and many an obscure clerical joker has had his “wit” stolen from him and credited to another who was at the time the idol of the hour. It is a most difficult

task to tell truthfully or accurately just who *should* be credited with some splendid witticism that is going "the rounds" at some particular time. But what of that? The bright *bonmot* or repartee flashed forth, and adown the pathway of the years it finds its way on and on, from man to man, across seas and continents, ever living, ever amusing, a thing indestructible, meeting us, after the lapse of years, in an after-dinner speech with the formula that is more or less attractive: "As Sydney Smith says."

The jokers of whom we speak *used* wit, but never *abused* it, and some of their jokes were oftentimes so full of wisdom as well as wit that they passed into sayings and proverbs, crystalizing for the masses into good, practical, common-sense views of things. Hence the saying, "The wit of one man, the wisdom of many." The witty priests and merry preachers did good work when out of the chancel or pulpit, as haters of all sorts of shams, foibles, weaknesses, pomposities and worse things. These they spared not, but, attacking them with the keen shafts of ridicule, saw many an evil blush and hide its baleful head. These clerical wits assailed bad fashions, bad customs, bad manners and *bad morals*. They knew just how to puncture the inflated one, and with a joke could lay low an adversary, whether prince or peasant. The "high" and "mighty" in church or state, in the world of fashion, or in the realm of letters found often to their cost that *some* of the

clergy knew how to use wit and logic, laughter and argument.

“Old South, a witty Churchman reckoned,
Was preaching once to Charles the Second.
But much too serious for a court,
Who at all preaching make a sport,
He soon perceived his audience nod,
Deaf to the zealous man of God.
The Doctor stopped, began to call,
‘Pray wake the Earl of Lauderdale!
My Lord, why ’tis a monstrous thing
You *snore so loud you’ll wake the king.*’ ”

This was Dr. South’s witty way of rebuking king and courtier. He, like many another brother of the cloth, knew how to discriminate between the “use” and “abuse” of wit. May the tribe increase !

Wit was very “useful” to a clergyman named *Joseph*, in the Isle of Man, who, according to “tradition” once hospitably entertained the Duke of Ormond who was driven by stress of weather to shelter there while on his way to assume the vice Lord Lieutenantship of Ireland. The Duke, appreciating the poor curate’s kindness and hospitality, promised to give him a good living as soon as he was settled in his new and high position. The poor parson was exceedingly elated and waited patiently for some word of further cheer from the great man. But months rolled by, and hope deferred made his heart sick. At last he determined on going to Dublin. He went, and waiting on the great wit, Dean Swift, begged un-

der the circumstances to be allowed to preach at the Cathedral of St. Patrick the next Sunday. This the Dean (who foresaw some "funny side" to the affair) consented to. The Sunday arrived, and with it the Lord Lieutenant, who attended the Cathedral in State. He seated himself in the proper pew opposite the pulpit. At the right time the Rev. Mr. "Joseph" advanced to the pulpit, and, looking fixedly at the Duke whose name was Butler, he announced with due solemnity his text from Gen. xl : 23: "Yet did not the chief *Butler* remember *Joseph*, but forgat him." And then he proceeded to deliver a really good and telling sermon on "Ingratitude," which not only reminded the Duke of his promise, but ended in an invitation to the witty cleric to dine at the Castle, where the noble Duke said, "*I do remember my faults this day*,"—and soon found him a cosy living.

In "*Ministerial Table Talk*" a story is told of Dr. Paley, the famous author of the "Evidences." The doctor remarked with contempt how not only the rank and file but even the leading members of the University of Cambridge fawned upon Pitt who at the age of twenty-three paid a visit to the University, being then First Lord of the Treasury, and Chancellor of the Exchequer. The meaning of the flattery bestowed upon the youthful Premier could have but one "interpretation;" the flatterers were looking ahead "for the loaves and fishes," the good things that the Premier had in

the way of patronage. So Dr. Paley, having to preach at St. Mary's on the Sunday after Pitt's arrival, carried out an idea that had occurred to him,—to convey a covert rebuke to those guilty of such sycophancy,—and he proceeded forthwith to deliver a sermon from the gospel for the fourth Sunday in Lent on the text: "There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes,"—adding with a significant pause, and glance around—"*but what are they among so many?*" The shaft went home, the public reproof was acknowledged to be witty—and just. Here we have a striking example of the *use* of wit—even in a University pulpit, and from the Holy Scriptures.

Chapter III.

Does the Clerical Joker Succeed in Life ?

"The sense of humor seldom gets due credit for the good work it does, or helps to do. Men often mark the blunders that are made through lack of it; but they do not think of the real excellence of mind and character into which it enters."—*Dean Paget.*

THE query at the head of this chapter would be answered by some people with an emphatic "no," and on the other hand, there are not wanting those who think they can prove that wit and humor are *not* hindrances, but rather helps to all sorts and conditions of men in winning success in life. It is strange how widely men differ in their views on this phase of our subject.

Take as an illustration two men who in every sense were *great* men and representative, and withal Presidents of the United States. The first is Mr. Lincoln, who on one occasion said, "I have been found fault with a good deal because of my jokes and anecdotes, but I have always found that the plain people, take them as they run, are more easily influenced when the truth is driven home by a good story, and illustrated by some bit of broad

humor, than when any other method is used. The only ones who object to my stories are the hypercritical, and I care nothing for their opinion." We see here Mr. Lincoln's "secret," if it be a secret, as to winning the ear of the masses, while looking to success in a political career. That Mr. Lincoln with such a life-motto was *not* successful, few sensible people would have either the hardihood, or lack of patriotism, to affirm.

Turning to President Garfield we have from him an exactly *opposite* opinion. A prominent and highly esteemed American in an interview lately stated that towards the close of a day he had once spent with President James A. Garfield the latter said: "You are cut out for a public man. You might reach my level in the public service but for one thing, and that is your reputation as a wit. It is fatal and will surely bar your progress unless you give it up. I have studied the American public closely and carefully, and I have come to the conclusion that it will not place confidence in the man who says humorous things. I advise you from this day to stop telling stories, to stop cracking jokes."

Alas! the world still believes, to some extent, in the *dignity of dullness*, and it must be admitted that the wit must be a man of courage—to *be himself*; and this will ever remain true, until we learn what true success in life is. Sydney Smith, Canon of St. Paul's, was laughing at the kind of people Mr. Lincoln called "hypercritical" when

he propounded that clever joke to his own brother, who, judged by a worldly standard had made more of a success of his life than the great cleric. Said Sydney, "Brother, you and I are exceptions to the laws of nature; *you have risen by your gravity, and I have sunk by my levity.*"

Swift may be pointed out as an example of what befalls a wit, but his pamphleteering and "savage politics" were probably the real reason of his so-called non-success. He was ever in the heat of political life, and so far in advance of his times that many of the "old school" could not understand a priest writing in favor of the "abolition of Christianity." They could not see "the joke," and *thought he meant it*. It takes nearly a century for some people to "see a joke," for, as Josh Billings says, "although fun is designed for the millyun and ethiks for the few, it is as true as molasses, that most all aujiences have their bell wether people, who show the others *the crack where the joke comes in.*" In Dean Swift's time and until these days, there are *but few bell-wethers*—when you want them most.

Still we think if "statistics" could be gathered (as they are gathered now-a-days for everything under the sun,) it would be possible to find enough "data" to prove that the "jokers," whether lay or cleric, have by no means been *left-behind*. Some solemn people may not take to "jokers" so "seriously" as they should, but many of them have managed to get three meals a day, and some

of them have even won a prize or two in the lottery of life.

One thing is certain in regard to the clerical joker,—the judicious joker; *he enjoys* life, “makes it pleasant” for those around him, and therein follows the golden rule.

If for a moment we look “seriously” and in a *ministerial way* at this subject, we can readily see that it is praiseworthy to aid and cheer our brother man in the turmoil and strife of life, and that he who, though it be but for the moment only, is able to lift from a fellow creature the burden of care, is a benefactor, be he a novelist like Dickens, a poet, like Tom Hood, a caricaturist, like Cruickshank Gibson, or any of their successors, a humorist, like Mark Twain, or a clergyman, like any one of our companions in this book.

We need not advocate ebullitions of “the funny man” in the pulpit. Those small, smart wits who seek to win their auditors thus, always find out, sooner or later, that they must seek pastures new. The people will not stand it. But they will gladly listen to the “religious talk” that is enlivened with a good and apt story or humorous allusion that “drives home the point.”

St. Augustine somewhere speaks of the witty way in which enemies of the faith “served up” their heresies, and chides the defenders of the faith for discoursing “in a style enough to send the reader (or hearer) to sleep.” The great saint was a shrewd man of affairs. Clergy men will

have to learn that the world moves, and he who would be "popular" and successful now-a-days must throw off that cold austerity of manner,—which is the product of a smileless, joyless theology that has had to pass away—to return no more for ever.

You cannot bring up "young America" on the religious pabulum of the old days. Fancy the rising generation singing in a modern Sunday School:

"There is a dreadful hell,
And everlasting pains,
Where sinners must with devils dwell
In darkness, fire and chains."

The religious people of other days have much to answer for. They lived under the heavy cloud of "God's sovereignty" until it seemed to them a sin to laugh, and almost wicked to propound a merry jest. The clerical wit had "no show" in those dark days, and it is a sign of the times that the average religious person demands not only a more hopeful theology, but a more cheerful pastor, than his father's was.

Christian people want to feel that there is something more inspiring in Christianity than the ditty they were taught in their youth:

"No room for mirth or trifling here,
For worldly hope or worldly fear,
If life so soon be gone."

And the "up to date" parson is just as enthusiastic in inculcating pleasanter views of life as

his lay brother. He realizes that for some things we are deeply indebted to the austere Puritanic piety of other days, and yet at the same time he would not care to affirm that the Puritans were of a *cheerful, breezy, hopeful, or humorous type*. (*) And he rejoices that he lives in an age when *some Christians believe that one can be pious and laugh*.

The man who best reaches his fellow men in the work of the ministry is he who in his own person embodies the good nature and humor which, coupled with God's grace, enables him to manifest the true spirit of the faith. It is, we think, in some such frame as this that the average parson is to win men to that attitude of receptivity that is essential to personal acceptance of the "good news" of God. Such a priest, all other things being equal, will commend the gospel to many men who have become alienated by reason of its former repellant gloom, for these men say, in effect, "If religion makes men gloomy, I want none of it; if it stifles genuine and innocent mirth, or vetoes the merry jest, then I must try to do without it."

In a word, the witty priest or merry preach-

(*) "There is a virus of Puritanism in the Anglo-Saxon's attitude toward his pleasures the world over. He is apt to be a little shame-faced, sometimes a little morose about them. Lurking in his mind is a sort of suspicion that all pleasure must be a little wrong, and this moral attitude influences the effect of his pleasures on him for evil. Amusements that carry with them a taint of reproach tend to become vulgar because he thinks them so. The man who seeks distraction, recreation, amusement, finds waiting for him base purveyors to what is in itself an innocent instinct."—*Churchman*.

er is the better for being possessed of this gift, inasmuch as he best *enjoys* this life, and hopes later to enjoy that which is to come. Real Christianity echoes the sentiment of the Old Testament where it says that "there is a time to laugh" as well as "a time to weep," and that life is abundantly successful that carries out the command of an apostle who has bidden us to "rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." If all be true that the parson teaches, then he, of all men, should be able to laugh the loudest and enjoy life, with its many blessings, most.

It is a mistake to think that all witty priests and merry preachers employ wit in its exact sense in the pulpit, for some of the wittiest ministers have refrained from its too frequent use there. But nearly all who were so gifted allowed their fancy its full play, and at the right time, and in the right way, could point a moral and adorn a tale with wonderful flashes of humor that made their preaching largely what it was—pungent, eloquent and effective.

The tone, or color of sermonic discourse when thus enlivened by *unconscious* wit or humor was oftentimes the subtle "something" that made the public utterances of these men immortal. Of this class were such men as Smith, Rowland Hill, C. H. Spurgeon, Henry Ward Beecher, Lorenzo Dow, Peter Cartwright, or Peter Mackenzie, and many others who in the Anglican, the Roman, and other religious bodies felt that this gift was not

of the earth, earthy.

Whether we attribute the remarkable success of such men to the possession of these or any other gifts, or to the joint possession of all combined, it must be admitted that the "funny part" certainly did not prevent their advancement in their several spheres, nor does it require a genius to show that *somehow* they were abundantly successful and blessedly useful in the world.

Only a very few parsons find this faculty of seeing the funny, the quaint, the odd, a real hindrance. Still I have heard of such, for there are exceptions to every rule. But such men are the last persons in the world to depreciate this gift in *others*; only they complain that for *them* it is at times inconvenient. This sort of thing is due to causes somewhat difficult for most of us to understand. Lately I heard of a minister, who, living in an Eastern State, told a layman that "he found the sense of humor a cross." He is almost alone "in his glory." My complaint about the average parson is that he carries a cross in not possessing a sufficiently large and proper sense of humor. This "*abnormal*" parson, for such he should be designated, once lost a parish through undue levity, caused by an odd experience which he must tell in his own way. Says he:

"Two or three years ago I had a charge in a small town, and there were some fine fruit-trees in my yard. One day one of the elders, a most

godly man, came to call. When he went away my wife said to him: 'Mr. Smith, wouldn't you like to take a few of our pears home to Mrs. Smith? They are so fine this year.'

'He said he'd like to do it; so I told him to go down in the garden and gather them, while I found my hat, and then I'd walk down street with him. I hunted up my hat and hurried round the house, just in time to see an appalling sight. I had a dog, a fat, short-breathed, ugly cur, but faithful, and I had taught him to protect our fruit. The elder walked in solemn dignity down the garden. The cur followed suspiciously. The elder lifted his hands and picked a pear. The cur made a flying leap, seized the elder by his coat-tails and there he hung, gasping and growling. The holy man cried out and tried to run, but the fat dog held on and dangled. At last the tails abandoned the coat, the breathless dog fell on his back wheezing, with the broadcloth tails spread over him like a pall, and the tailless elder fled up the walk and met me.

"I wrestled manfully. I broke out into a cold perspiration in my effort to look seriously shocked and grieved. Then I broke out into a laugh and that settled me. He has never forgiven me. My levity led to my moving the next fall. Now, if the 'elder' had the sense of humor and the clergyman hadn't, how easy the ministry would seem—comparatively speaking, you understand. As it is, some clergymen have much to contend

with aside from their spiritual responsibilities, and in my case the flesh—and muscles—are weak, very weak.”

While it remains true that some parsons have little or no sense of humor, the difficulty with this good man was just the reverse—he had too much; or if he had not an abnormal sense of the ludicrous, he had not the power to control his mirth, so that at times he was almost driven to distraction—and resignation from the ministry. Like a friend of our boyhood he wanted to laugh at all sorts of inopportune times, and perhaps like him in another sense he might have pleaded as an excuse “that his laugh was simply a contraction of the muscles.” Other ministers have seen peculiar happenings even in sacred places and are still alive, and in the ministry.

The parson has served as a target for the wit of a good many “throughout the generations,” and his absent-mindedness, his frequent “breaks” in reading notices and in the performance of other duties have oftentimes tried the “risible nerves” of a godly and well-behaved people. The pew hears and sees some very funny things, and many a quiet looking “official” has been sorely puzzled to keep a straight face when the unexpected has happened. Few could suppress a smile in the presence of an absent-minded parson, living in the neighborhood of Boston, of whom it is said that he has not only a short memory, but breaks down in the midst of a sentence. To

counteract this, it is a habit with him, when he forgets anything, to rise again and make a few supplementary remarks, which he always begins with the phrase, "By the way." One Sunday he got half way through a prayer from memory, when he hesitated, forgot what he was about, and sat down abruptly without pronouncing the closing word. In a moment or two he rose, and pointing his finger at the amazed congregation, he exclaimed: "Oh, by the way, Amen!"

Not long since a clergyman of the Irish Church calmly gave out among his notices that on a certain date A. B. would publicly, in church, "renounce the errors of *Romanism* for those of *Protestantism*." And he resumed the even tenor of his service, as though he had done nothing amiss.

Clerical mannerisms, the pulpit tone, eccentricities of voice or gesture,—all these have given rise to endless little jokes that the laity indulge in when they get together—and the parsons are at a safe distance. Yet while all that is true, our clerical friend who saw the funny things easily was not the only man who has from a chancel or pulpit beheld strange and amusing sights in the pew. If a parishioner who finds the parish church just the place for a snooze, could see himself as "ithers see him,"—the parson for instance. If he could behold the inane, or idiotic expressions of his human face divine, he would

not give the pulpit a chance to smile at his nods and contortions, but, cost what it might, he would keep awake.

The parson and the layman are sometimes utterly unconscious of any "blunder" that touches the ludicrous. Yet such an odd thing happened at a prayer service lately that I cannot refrain from referring to it, especially as the minister told it to a layman himself. It happened on this wise. Two members of his flock were moved to prayer at the same time. This could in most cases have been left to adjust itself, but the two concerned were noted for their extraordinary lung power. So they went loudly on, utterly unconscious of the other's prayer. What wonder that all present were utterly unable to pray with the same spirit and understanding also. It was altogether too funny for a prayer-meeting. I am sure the lay people laughed, but the poor parson did his best not to scandalize the "brethren" by laughing. He afterwards admitted "he dared not crack a smile," and wondered why he had ever entered the ministry.

That some laymen "see the funny side" of things we know full well, and that *they* do not restrain their smile is also well known. It is not so long since that a young and earnest minister in a sermon on "The Significance of Little Things," said: "The hand which made the mighty heavens made a grain of sand; which made the lofty mountains made a drop of water;

which made *you* made the grass of the field; which made *me*, made a daisy." The irrepressible and almost audible smile that rippled across the faces of those present was evidence of the "lay" appreciation of the unconscious joke.

That the congregation can sometimes perceive the humorous "allusion" is abundantly proven, for not so long ago a clergyman managed to break up an irreverent custom that obtains too much in certain religious congregations, namely, hastening to reach the porch or vestibule before the final words of blessings. So to put a stop to it, the parson said: "Those of the congregation who *did not get their things on during the final prayer, can do so while I pronounce the benediction.*" They saw the point, were moved to doing better by such a mild and humorous rebuke, and the result shows once more that some parsons are helped in their work by wit or humor.

George Herbert, in his "Priest in the Temple," speaking on "Mirth," says something about the country parson refreshing himself. Knowing that pleasantness is an aid, and because men *shun the company of perpetual severity*, he says: "Instructions seasoned with pleasantness both enter sooner, and root deeper; . . . wherefore he condescends to intermingle some mirth in his discourse occasionally."

He means, I think, that the clergyman needs the gift of *adaptation*, and certainly nothing makes for permanent success more than this.

The modern clergyman must endeavor to *cultivate* this gift, bridging the proverbial, yet very *real gulf* that has been the bane of the ministry. That saying that "there are three sexes,—*men, women, and clergyman,*" crystalizes the all-too prevalent idea of the isolation of the ministry

How few ministers have perfect freedom, real and unfettered intercourse with men of the world? How few have facility in honestly becoming all things to all men that they may win some! Some clergymen, *men's* clergymen, have "a something" that, without the compromise of dignity, or appearing a little fast, or even over familiar, or patronizing, do *somehow* manage to keep men at their ease, so that when the parson appears among them they do not feel called upon to put on a "pious air" or assume an attitude proper to the occasion.

How is it that some ministers do thus "win a good degree?" May not the answer be found in some such way as is here suggested?

Jollity, mirth, good spirits, humor,—these really tell the story, and those to-day who, in society, in parochial work, or in slums would win success, must feel that wit and humor, liveliness and good nature, are a bond of sympathy with both the masses and the classes.

The people enjoy humorous cheer, and law-makers, reformers, civic federationists, teachers, and preachers should proclaim for the masses the gospel of relaxation, the gospel of laughter,

lest "the masses" vent their spleen which is not only "dull" but sometimes dangerous on their devoted heads.

God's own palliatives and remedies are safest and best, and so we should welcome the rollicking mirth, the laughter of the people; for when the people laugh "they will commit no deadly sin." The politician, the political economist, and the socialist are each in their several ways striving to keep the "masses" contented and quiet, but the truth is, our teeming millions *keep themselves contented and happy*. The masses are optimistic, so far as our experience goes. They wait so patiently for the good time coming, and one of the factors in maintaining this state of things lies in the fact that the people try to forget their troubles and their wrongs, not always, as some think, in low pursuits and evil recreations, but in innocent, even if somewhat boisterous mirth. If you watch them at close range, you will discover these tendencies. The wide-awake newspaper editor knows this full well, and caters to the American people's love of humor and jokes. He supplies the demand, and so in the great city daily and the little, obscure country weekly, there is found "the funny column," containing jests and gibes, often more or less "chestnuty" to some, but nevertheless "new" and popular with the people who cannot afford to be too particular.

I am willing to admit that many people can-

not *create* smart jests worth printing in the comic papers, but I do believe that they have sense and wit enough to apprehend and appreciate the humor of our jokers of a certain brand. It speaks well for the poorest and "least" among us to know that the "wit" of a down-town section of the city has a recognized place among "his set" as a joker, or story-teller, as assured as he who rubs his back against the "select" set of Belgravia, or Fifth Avenue, or Club-dom. Possibly the exact forms in which the facetious spirit manifests itself among the masses might offend the hyper-sensitive taste of the so-called fashionable people, yet these "other" people mean well, and if by these most lawful means our brothers in poverty, who too often grind their bones to make their bread, can break from time to time the terrible monotony of their "shut in" lives, he must cut a sorry figure who would either deny them this little privilege, or ridicule them in their attempts at mirth, or fail to contribute his portion to the common stock.

It may not come to pass that the poorest should see a good picture every day, should read a few pleasant pages, and withal should have a little good music thrown in, but it is possible for our poorer and less-favored neighbour to have his little joke, or his funny yarn; and this is something within the reach of all, and must not be despised.

One of the things we are beginning to find

out is, that the "tastes" of the rank and file of the people are actually very similar to those of the more favored classes. They know something of the three R's. They read, and can enjoy the comic paper. They can appreciate and enjoy to a certain extent the pun, the joke, the queer illustration or caricature. They can also see the grotesque, the "contrary" thing, and while some of these would be afraid to "joke with the priest," lest it should be deemed an insult, yet we venture to predict that if the priest ventured to part with his conventional dignity for a moment, he would be well repaid by seeing the "inside" of the life of many of his poorest people, and he would get many a keen retort, would hear many a good and clean "story" in the humble abodes where least expected, and would learn a thing or two about "reaching the masses."

Chapter IV.

Why We Laugh, or the Nature and Function of Wit and Humor.

"The (true) gentleman delights in humor, because God has given us our sense and power of humor for our constant refreshment, and as a great means, if wisely used, whereby he may dissuade men from the meanness and misery of vice."—*Dean Hole*.

LAUGHTER is God-given. The gift that creates laughter is likewise God-given, and the faculty, call it what you will, that perceives and appreciates the grotesque, the unusual, the provincial, the exaggeration, the contrast or the contradiction,—this, too, is God-given.

A good deal has been written on the *nature* of wit and humor, and a number of philosophers have attempted "to set in order," on philosophic grounds, what should be received among us as the cause of laughter. In an interesting article published some time since in *Revue des Deux Mondes*, and translated for *Appleton's Popular Science Monthly*, the following causes for laughter were given:

"Laughter is favored by various circumstances and conditions—as a good state of physi-

al being, infancy and youth, exultation over success, the buoyancy we feel after having escaped danger, and cheerful moods. Some writers have sought the cause of laughter among these conditions, but we think they are only incidents and simply help it by promoting freedom and agility of mind. Children, who have no fixed habits, and are vastly more susceptible to impressions than their elders, perceive the different shades of objects and their contrasts more speedily than they, and are more prone to laughter. Mental dullness, physical trouble and disappointment, mistakes, anxiety or mental pain are restraints upon laughter, or prevent it. Thus the more a thing appears to us at once unusual on one side and familiar on the other, the greater is the tendency to laughter; and the less pronounced the contrast, the less we are amused at it."

I remember hearing Eli Perkins say we laugh at "exaggerations." This is doubtless true, and together with our comic blending of the sacred and profane, doubtless characterizes and differentiates our broad and somewhat clownish American humor from all other brands. The popular humorist is buoyant, and is nothing if he does not reflect our national "bigness," for the humorist "*reflects*," while he *laughs* at the crudeness of the great Republic.

It was "Eli," too, whom I heard define "the humorous" as deformed logic, deformed rhetoric, and who showed that we unfortunately often

laugh at anything deformed. And here it may be well to glance for a moment at a few definitions of wit and humor, for "many men of many minds" have left on record their views on the subject. Giles gives us an admirable definition when he says: "Wit may be a thing of pure imagination, but humor involves sentiment and character. Humor is of a genial quality, dwells in the same character with pathos, and is always mingled with sensibility."

From the clergyman's standpoint nothing can be more laudatory or inspiring than the beautiful definition given by Cheever who says most truly: "The union of genuine, rich humor with deep piety, and the chastened spontaneous use of it under the guidance of a sound judgment, are among the rarest manifestations of intellectual power." This is encouraging to the witty priest or preacher who has too often been made to feel that in exercising "this rarest manifestation of intellectual power" he has been looked upon as a sort of intellectual "light weight,"—as a *parson* with the jingling bells of the "court fool."

Sydney Smith gives us a veritable gem in this connection. He says: "Man could direct his way by plain reason, and support life by tasteless food, but God has given him wit and flavor, laughter and perfume, to enliven the days of man's pilgrimage, and to charm his pained footsteps over the burning marl."

Quotations might be multiplied, but to what purpose? Definitions will never beget or develop the humorous faculty, if by ill luck any should chance to be destitute of the gift.

It is hard to believe, however, that very many of our fellow men *are* so poverty-stricken as not to possess in some hidden corner of their "make-up" this priceless possession.

One would much rather believe that somewhere in every human character there lies, it may be, concealed beneath the ice and frost of conventional peculiarities, this beneficent thing, which, for want of a better word, we call humor. Surely the sunshine of genial wit will some "sweet day" cause the flowers to spring up and bud. Surely *some* style of wit or drollery would unlock the door and let out the pent-up spirits which in so many ways call for "liberty."

The man who *cannot* or *will not* allow himself to laugh is a man whom his fellows will often shun. The average man says, "Beware of him." With all seriousness we may say for laymen and clergy alike that there can be no more desirable thing in this life than a great supply of good humor, every-day wit, which in spite of the ever-varying, petty, and trying conditions of life, will gild the present with hope and, instead of perpetually whining, will enable us to smile. For what saith the Scriptures? "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine."

Life for most people is no protracted joke,

but the kind of man we are depicting will see to it that it is not spent as a prolonged *frown*,—an everlasting grumble of discontent or morbid melancholy; and let us emphasize this truth that there is really no connection between Christianity and “the blues.” The long faced priest or preacher is not a “survival of the fittest.” Nor are these the days to wave off this kind of reasoning with the excuse that good nature and humor are all a matter of temperament, or environment. Men expect from the modern parson a good many new things, and among them something besides pious amiability. Every minister should have with him daily the “oil of gladness”—good humor,—to lubricate the wheels of daily life, thereby preventing undue heat, and all the dire results of too much friction.

Surely every man can give some good reasons for his indulgence, if it be an indulgence, in wit, and can answer satisfactorily the query, “Of what benefit is wit or humor?” The present Archbishop of Canterbury is credited with the following “method” in dealing with those clergy who have not won his favor. *He* apparently finds wit and humor useful in the chair of St. Augustine. According to the *Sunday Magazine* it appears that an incumbent wanted to hold another living in plurality and had to apply to the archbishop for leave to do so.

What happened may, without disrespect to “the cloth,” be put in dramatic form:

Scene—Lambeth. *Time*—1897.

Archbishop—"How far is the new living from your present cure?"

Applicant—"About six miles, as the crow flies, your grace."

Archbishop—"You're not a crow, you can't fly, and you shan't have it."

Curtain.

Humor is useful in keeping "sweet" those who radically differ from each other in theology, or things ecclesiastical. Dr. Guthrie used to relate that, in an interview he once had with Canon Melville, the pleasant and able ecclesiastic laid his hand on the shoulder of the great Presbyterian divine and said. "Now, Dr. Guthrie, I will say to you what one of our clergy said to Robert Hall,—perhaps you will make me his reply. Said the clergyman to Hall, I love and honour you notwithstanding you have *not* received episcopal ordination; and said Hall to the clergyman, I love and honour you notwithstanding that you *have* received episcopal ordination."

Is not this spirit far better than that which has been altogether too prevalent among those "who profess and call themselves Christians" when, in the old times, as Ingersoll, the agnostic, reminds us occasionally, every sort of sectarian thought his differing "brother" was "a tenement house of devils"?

Speaking of Ingersoll recalls a witty way of "disposing" of the agnostic's arguments—with-

out abuse, or denunciation. He had been lecturing in Scranton, Pennsylvania, and in his lecture said: "I would rather stand at the great Judgment Day, if there is such a day, as Robert Burns, drunk, with the consciousness that I had written 'A man's a man for a' that,' than to confess that I was a Scotch Presbyterian." Hearing of this remark, Dr. McL,—who is a *Scotch Presbyterian*, replied: "I think that would be a good epitaph to put on Ingersoll's tombstone after his death—'Robert burns.' "

Numerous instances could be cited to show that in every conceivable walk of life, and in almost every sort of daily experience, wit and humor are splendid acquisitions "to pull us through" some embarrassing situation or strained relation. What public man is not pestered with all sorts of peculiar callers, "the Lord's silly people," not a few of whom are what the newspapers call "cranks." One of the latter called upon the Bishop of Natal, before he was a bishop and while he was Secretary to Archbishop Benson. It was his duty to interview each of the many callers who professed to have "business" with the Archbishop. The gentleman in question was shewn in. "Your Grace," he began in a great hurry, "I have a serious matter to bring before your notice. I regret to say that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have declared their resolve to *burn me alive in my house*. I place myself in your Grace's hands." Dr. Baynes took a plain sheet

of note paper, and, writing upon it, "I hereby forbid anyone to burn Mr. Smith in his house without first consulting me on the matter," he handed it, *unsigned*, to the expectant and grateful visitor, who departed with a mind absolutely at rest.

Wit and humor have frequently subverted a useful purpose, as Dean Hole says, by dissuading men from the meanness and misery of vice. Take the drink habit. How unavailing are arguments founded on scientific and many other grounds. But a shaft of wit will sometimes fasten a truth in a sure place,—especially if the victim of drink be an Irishman, who understands the "blarney." A case in point is that of an Irish priest of the Roman Church who had labored long with a parish inebriate. All attempts to make him give up whiskey had failed. One day he tried again and said: "I tell you, Michael, whiskey is your worst enemy, and you should keep as far away from it as you can." "Me enemy, is it, Father?" responded Michael, "and it was Your Riverence's self that was tellin' us in the pulpit only last Sunday to *love* your enemies!" "So I was, Michael," rejoined the priest, "but I didn't tell you to *swallow* them."

These are days in which "the art of putting things" is of great value to every man, and the secret of being witty or humorous without silliness or frivolity is well worth learning. Let not the witty parson hide his light under a bushel,

neither "let him be afraid" to exploit his jokes and repartee, nor should he forget the noble ancestry of "that ilk." The wits of past days, who wore their honors bravely, were clerics of whom we should be proud. They did a noble work in their day, sustaining the dignity and purity of the merry jest, for their wit savored not of the tavern, or race-tracks, but of the cloister. They were men who were a sort of intellectual and moral "salt," sweetening and keeping from putrefaction the social and moral elements around them. So, in the language of Pope, let us feel that we too may share with the past in garnering our golden sheaves of innocent mirth to sustain the joyous life of our fellow men, for

"True wit is nature to advantage dressed,
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed,
Something whose truth, convinced at sight, we find
That gives us back the image of the mind.
As shades more sweetly recommend the light,
So modest plainness sets off sprightly wit."

Chapter V.

The Bible Contains the Elements of Humor.

"There are certainly passages in the Bible which in any other writings we should call wit and humor."—*Rev. M. D. Shutter.*

IT is just possible that some may think the title of this chapter approaches dangerously near the the border-land of irreverence for the holy Scriptures. But no one need lift hands of pious horror, for no irreverence is intended. On reflection it will appear to the unprejudiced that the Bible treats not only of the momentous themes pertaining to man's destiny, but that these same Scriptures are rich in their delineation of human life and character,—of life in its many-sidedness,—its "accords" and "discord,"—and these would make any literature the possessor of the elements of wit and humor.

It is not within our province here to emphasize the Bible's "*chief things*," but rather to mention briefly what we may be permitted to style its subordinate things, looking at the sacred writings as literature.

The Bible has been justly called "the painter's book" because the artist has drawn from its pages the noblest conceptions and the most exalted subjects.

It might be called also "the poet's book," for have not the holy Scriptures inspired the song of "the immortals"? Milton found in the Pentateuch his "*Paradise Lost*," and the other poets have likewise drunk deeply of its truth and beauty. In a word, literary men of all beliefs and of no belief, have frankly admitted, like Ruskin, "their indebtedness" to the Bible. Matthew Arnold could not be censured for reading the New Testament in the original for "style," and the man who reverently studies the holy Scriptures for things new and old will do himself no harm, even if he disregards the ancient prejudices, and looks for irony, ridicule, invective, and good natured banter, which, in spite of the "ignoring method" of certain commentators, are most assuredly found in the word of God.

The Scriptures were not primarily "inspired" to *amuse* men, but to guide their feet into the way of peace. Almost every page contains the sublimest truth, couched in the most striking language, impregnated with the most affecting pathos, but those parts dealing with real human life cannot be expunged nor ignored, and these in their truthful delineations necessarily contain what we may call—even with bated breath—Wit and Humor.

All literature that has exerted a lasting influence upon mankind has contained these essential elements, and the Bible is no exception to the rule. Diligent and dispassionate research, without traditional bias, or prejudice, will reveal again and again in both Testaments these "touches of nature that make the whole world kin." In other words, we may find therein pointed proverb, repartee, irony, and ridicule, occasionally interspersed with some "peculiar situation," that, even at this distance, provokes not hilarious laughter, but the quiet smile.

These are days of acknowledged non-Bible-reading, and all sorts and conditions of Christians profess to deplore it. Why should these same Scriptures sink in the estimation of the unchurched populace, and also in that of the Christian public who ignore Bible study nearly as much as the non-professor? Can it be wrong in *any* case for men to "search" the Scriptures, even if it is for "the least" of the things this treasury contains? Must not all study of the word of God be fraught with *some* good?

On account of the "higher critics" and the "destructive higher critics" too many people, who were at first shocked at the daring spirit of such scholarship, have come now to feel a mild contempt for the Bible. To counteract this in any measure must be a wise thing, and if, by *any* method we can regain for the Scriptures their rightful place in the popular heart and conscience,

even though it be on the lines indicated, who would dare to chide or condemn?

It must then be acknowledged that it is both legitimate and wise to study the Bible for its poetry, its biography, its pathos, its language, its high ideals, and it cannot be a sin to search it for these humorous elements of which we reverently speak.

In a pregnant sentence LeStrange says, speaking of the history of humor: "Samson is the first character in the records of antiquity who seems to have had anything quaint or droll about him." As one studies his romantic life, he gathers that Samson was indeed a rough and rugged jester—clumsy, but ever truly "fond of a joke," especially a joke in the concrete—a practical joke. We can almost hear his boisterous and triumphant laugh down the ages, as, after having given his riddles, and after having vanquished his foes, he says, brandishing his peculiar weapon: "With the jaw-bone of an ass have I slain a thousand men."

Who can, without amusement, imagine the scene described in the Book of Numbers, of Balaam, the prophet of Midian, who got into an altercation with his own brute beast, and was made to appear "small" and utterly wrong in the whole matter? Even Dr. Chalmers, who ever refrained from humor in the pulpit, (although he enjoyed it outside) was compelled, when preaching, speaking on this Scripture, to remark that

God did not employ an ass often, at least not when He could *get something better*.

Who can read of the great Elijah at Carmel and not perceive the irony and sarcasm he heaped upon the maddened prophets of Baal? The narrative is so well told that it could not be improved upon. 'And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal, from morning even until noon, saying: Oh Baal, hear us. But there was no voice nor any that answered, and they leaped upon the altar which they had made. And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah *mocked* them, and said: Cry aloud, *for he is a god*; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, or *peradventure he sleepeth*, and must be awaked'?

The Old Testament Scriptures *abound* in this sort of ridicule. With this handy weapon the men of God attacked ruthlessly the sins and follies of their times,—and to some purpose. Where can you find a more effective method of attacking idol worship, or the worship of false gods, than in the description given by the Psalmist, who, describing them in detail, says: "They have mouths and speak not, eyes have they and see not. They have ears and hear not. Noses have they and smell not. They have hands and handle not. Feet have they and walk not, neither speak they through their throat." He then adds a "home thrust" and says: "They that made them (the idols) are like unto them,"—block-heads,

fools.

The Psalms have been "commented" upon by a great many "commentators," and Mr. Spurgeon in his exhaustive work entitled "*The Treasury of David*" has done us good service in collating the varied "notes" upon different passages in the Psalter. It is quite refreshing to peruse some of "the quaint sayings" by writers ancient and modern, and to pick out the witty utterances of the very men who would have perhaps feared to say outright that the Scriptures contain wit and humor. As an illustration take the comment on verse 4 of the first Psalm: "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh."

Here are the words of Thos. Adams: "They scoff at us (Christians). God laughs at them. Laugh! This seems a hard word at the first view,.....according to our capacities. The prophet describes God, as ourselves would be in a merry disposition, deriding vain attempts. *He laughs*, but it is in scorn. He scorns, but it is with vengeance."

The greater prophets employed ridicule in their "message." And constantly warned and rebuked men with all authority, frequently exposing fallacies, and riddling their opponents' flimsy arguments with wit and logic.

The inquiring and wide-awake Bible student will find pleasure and profit in classifying the various elements that make up the wit and humor of the sacred volume. The Book of Proverbs

alone will, with this end in view, well repay careful study, for nowhere can we find more pungent, telling, epigrammatic sayings, pointed with dry humor, than in king Solomon's writings. He attacks in his day, what the wit has ever found it his chief business to do, the sins of the age. He rebukes the false and evil fashions and beliefs of men who hide and cloak their wrong doings. To-day the scold, the fool, the idler, the drunkard, and the babbler, or tale-bearer can "hear of something,—to his advantage" by taking heed to the wise and sometimes witty, or at least humorous, sayings of the great man Solomon.

Of the Holy Bible we may say:

"If thou art merry, here are airs.
If melancholy, here are prayers.
If studious, here are those things writ
Which may deserve thy ablest wit."

In this somewhat brief and imperfect discussion of the humor of the Old Testament we have not attempted to express fully our opinion as to the queries that have at times been put to thinkers regarding humor in the future state, nor whether there is a sense of humor in God. (*)

(*) Charles Kingsley in a letter written in 1857 to Rev. George Hen-slowe, who had written to him as to the possibility of a sense of humor in God says, in part: "I cannot see how your notions can be gainsaid, save by those who have a lurking belief that God is the devil, after all. . . . The matter presents itself to me thus; I see humor in animals, e. g., a crab, a monkey, a parrot. I don't find this the result of a low organization. Well; there the fact is; if I see it, God must see it also, or I must have more insight than God into God's own work. Then comes a deeper question. God sees it; but is he affected by it? I

These are matters for individual opinion, and need not concern us here only so far as they may aid us in our efforts of inquiry into the popular notions concerning the character of our Lord in this regard, and to test some of those, to us, erroneous notions in the light of the gospel narratives.

Since putting these thoughts together an article from the "*Literary Digest*" has come into our hands, and we are glad to see that so notable a scholar as Professor Friedrich Paulsen of the University of Berlin emphasizes, what we had for a long time taught, that the popular conception "that our Lord wept but never smiled," or indulged in pleasantry or humor—is misleading and erroneous.

In the course of the Professor's article he says: "We are accustomed to picture to ourselves the face of Jesus with the expression of exalted earnestness, mellowed by an afflatus of deep inward sorrow, and painters are accustomed to portray Him in accordance with this ideal. And this is in harmony with the fundamental traits of His character. Yet we are able from time to time to detect in Him a trait that does not so plainly appear on the surface, namely, the smile of the humor of irony. Irony is that inner habit of thought and of speech which comes into existence where a person who is in possession of superior truth,

think we could give no answer to this, save on the ground of a son of God, who is that image of the Father in whom man is created."

in the presence of others who claim themselves to be in the possession of such superior knowledge, accepts the position of inferiority assigned to him by his surroundings and from this seemingly humble position speaks and acts."

The Professor then refers to a fact noted by other writers, namely, that our Lord's method in dealing with the Hebrew mind was analogous to that employed by Socrates, and says:

"A close analysis of some of the discussions held between Jesus and His adversaries will show to what extent this is the case. The first meeting of the Master with the Pharisees is found in Matt. ix. Here the latter criticized Jesus for sitting at meat with the sinners. Christ heard this, and turning to them said: 'Not the strong have need of a physician, but the weak.' Without doubt this was uttered with the smile of irony, as though He would say: 'Certainly, people of such robust moral health, of such absolutely correct habits of life as the Pharisees are, do not need me or any Savior; such people need no physician; but those people who sit with me at table actually do need me.' And then, with His smile turning into an earnest expression, He added: 'That they who know the law and justice should go and study what it means, that God desires mercy and not sacrifice.'

The same smile of irony we find in connection with the story of the woman caught in adultery (John viii.) Here again we see Jesus between

the respectable and the non-respectable class, and siding with the latter. He addressed her accusers with the demand that he who is without sin should cast the first stone upon the woman. He would say, as it were, that He in His associations with the common people might not occupy the high level held by those who brought the woman; but ye, who are the correct and pure in character and conduct, do not allow yourselves by my inability to apply the law to be prevented from doing that which the law both permits and commands. His irony silenced her accusers and His tempters.

Such ironical turns were frequently given to others of Jesus's doings and sayings among the people, especially when the subject of Sabbath-breaking came up. Ironically He asks the Pharisees if they would not draw an ass or an ox out of the well on the Sabbath-day. Here we are especially told that His adversaries became ashamed and confused. The low people had by the irony of Jesus been led *ad absurdum*. Again, in His question concerning David's reason for calling his own son also his Lord, He employs the same method. Here, too, we may read the sportive question asked by the Lord of Peter (Matt. xvii: 25), and of the humoristic and comical smile with which the questions are directed to the high priests and elders in Matt. xxi: 28. The same rhetorical element is found in the narrative recorded in Luke vii: 36, and it assumes a touch of

sarcasm in Luke xiii: 31. Then, too, the ironical feature is undeniable in Christ's series of teachings on riches and the rich, to which His own condition formed the most pronounced contrast (Luke xvi: 1; Matt. x: 13). The characteristic is even retained in His trial. Christ's ironical treatment of His judges being apparent at many points."

Knowing what we know of our Lord and His beneficent work, is it likely that He who won the hearts of the little children,—coy, and shy as they often are,—could do so without a smile? Are we to believe that at the marriage feast in Cana He, the honored guest, was the only serious person present? Nay! let us rather imagine Him *adding to*, not *repressing* the mirth of the other guests, shedding abroad the bright rays of "sweetness and light" with gesture and smile, filling not only their wine pots, but their *hearts* also, with good cheer and innocent mirth.

The gospels reveal the Lord's wonderful *insight*,—His unerring analysis "of what was in man." He read their thoughts,—their inmost souls,—like the page of an open book. He saw men's motives. He could easily detect imposture, hypocrisy, and fraud, and in the necessary process of "saving" men, He of all men had to tear off the mask that they assumed in trying to hide their wrong-doing, or palliate their sins. In doing this our Lord most assuredly employed ridicule and irony. To the Samaritan woman he said:

"Go, call thy husband and come hither." The woman's artful reply shows she felt the stinging "insight," the veiled ridicule that *she* should attempt to deceive *him*, the Prophet—the Lord.

The traditional enemies of our Lord were constantly trying to "entangle Him in His talk," and how did He successfully meet their cleverly conceived assaults? With repartee, if the definition be correct "that repartee is the dextrous leap of thought by which the mind escapes from a seemingly hopeless dilemma." Think of the dilemma into which He placed the chief priests, when, having come to Him with a difficult question, "By what authority doest thou these things?" He instantly replied, "I will also ask of you one question, and answer me,—the baptism of John, was it from heaven or of men?" That silenced them. Over and over again He silenced them in similar fashion; so much so, that we read "from that time durst no man ask Him any more questions." The lesson we learn from this phase of our Lord's dealings with men is this, that He employed *all* the powers with which He was endowed in the defence of the truth which He was sent into the world to embody and proclaim. *His* attitude and example is our justification for claiming for all *our* powers due and proper recognition, not daring to suppress any one. *Him* we must imitate and follow. His methods, including the ironical, should be ours, and, further, His public methods stand forever as *the* example in presenting His

message to men. Some such estimate as this must have led the Apostles to employ invective, irony, and ridicule, in *their* public teaching, for we find in the writings of St. Paul to the Galatians *the pun*, (see Gal. v: 12.) and *irony*, in addressing the Greeks or Jews. In his epistle to the Corinthians, to those that are "puffed up," he says, ironically: "Now ye are full, now ye are rich; ye have reigned as *kings* without us, and I would that ye *did* reign,—we are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are *wise*. In Christ we are *weak*, but ye are *strong*; ye are honorable, but we are despised." Other examples might be quoted, and not only from St. Paul's writings, but from those of the other Apostles' reported words or writings.

St. Paul possessed the mental and spiritual qualities that have given him "imperishableness." He is one of the most interesting characters in history, the embodiment of Christian manhood, possessing the sublimest purity, the loftiest devotion, and certainly no man ever accomplished so much for the Christian church. Who shall say how much of this was due to the exercise of those great powers that were made more resplendent by the bright rays of wit?

A careful study of the sacred Scriptures will convince the candid reader that the prophets, apostles, and teachers were men of keen perception and humor, which, according to the customs and ideals of their times, were employed in refuting and vanquishing the enemies of the

faith, and it therefore follows, that the witty priest of today is in good, catholic company, and withal has for his comfort the most certain warrant of holy Scripture.

Once more let us listen to the great Augustine who says: "Who would say that truth ought to stand disarmed against falsehood, or that the enemies of the faith shall be at liberty to frighten the faithful with hard words, or jeer at them *with lively sallies of wit* while the Christians ought *never to write except with a coldness of style* enough to set the reader asleep?"

The good saint exhorts us to employ wit and humor, ridicule, invective, repartee, pleasantry, in the service of those who seek to diffuse the faith once delivered.

It is not to be wondered at, that those who believe that they are in any sense "the successors of the apostles," should in the *lesser* things, as in the *greater*, emulate the example of the holy men of old whose motto was to become all things to all men, that they might win some.

Chapter VI.

The Humor of the Stern Reformers.

"How curious it is that we always consider solemnity, and the absence of all gay surprises and encounters of wits, as essential to the idea of the future life of these whom we thus deprive of *half their faculties*, and then call them "blessed?" There are not a few, who, even in this life, seem to be preparing themselves for that smileless eternity, by banishing all gaiety from their hearts and all joyousness from their countenances."—*Oliver Wendell Holmes.*

IF the "*autocrat of the breakfast table*" had lived in the Reformation period, he could not have described more accurately many of the solemn, rugged Puritan divines, or their "flocks." It is undoubtedly true that many of those earnest, but terribly gloomy, men felt the full weight of the burden of life. They believed themselves to be charged with a tremendously solemn, difficult, and withal "godly" task. To them Anti-Christ had appeared, and must be opposed with all the powers they possessed. Those were days of fierce intolerance and narrow bigotry, days of bitter "religious" hate and persecution.

The men who headed the Reformation movement lived amid the storm of exciting religious controversy; they were enveloped in dense clouds of political uncertainty, never knowing what a day might bring forth. Under such conditions as these, no wonder that Calvin and his coadjutors (with their smileless, joyless theology) did not indulge in coining elegant pleasantries, or in making brilliant jokes for the delectation of either friend or foe.

The study of the Calvinistic theology, as seen in the precept and practice of their successors under far more favorable circumstances, shows that their theological beliefs alone were in themselves almost weight enough to crush out the bright and beautiful things we call wit and humor. The Reformers were *tremendously consistent*. Their life corresponded to, and reflected, the letter of their awful system of theology. Verily they practiced what they preached. A smileless theology called for a smileless religious life, and the end was a smileless eternity.

Those men lived in stirring times and *without* their peculiar theology would have found themselves far too busy to indulge in lighter veins of mirth and jollity. We give them full credit for the possession of the sterner,—the Hebraistic virtues, and we must remember that the *English* Reformation was certainly not a "Revolution," much less a total "deformation" as certain modern ecclesiastical writers do not hesi-

tate to style that great movement in Europe.

It is not our intention to express an opinion as to just how far the Reformers succeeded or failed. Our purpose is altogether different from that. And lest haply we be already "on dangerous ground," theologically, we hasten to "say a good word for the great Reformers,"—for that some of them were, in very deed, *great*, and even *good* men, no candid student of the history of the times will deny.

It is pleasant to find, amid the contention, the animus, the gloom of that trying period on the Continent, here and there some cheery souls, who could sometimes forget "the eternal decrees" and "election," and *elect* to crack a joke with some who had the good fortune to be "elected" to hear them.

The men who contrived to laugh in *those* days are entitled to lasting praise. It was a *wonderful* achievement to break away from the cold stereotyped religionism of that period—and *enjoy* anything—outside the burning of a heretic. Romanist, Anglican, Calvinist, all found it hard to find anything to laugh at, and yet some of the stern leaders of the Reformation *did* laugh—all honor to them for having the buoyancy and manliness to shake off the conventional gloom that they might brighten the dark days that tried so terribly the souls of our ecclesiastical "fighters."

Chief among these was Dr. Martin Luther, the monk that shook the world. The man was

then not only making history, but was winning for himself in the German heart a unique place, that intensifies and grows with the passing of the years. The chief events of his remarkable career need no recapitulation. They are known to all. Luther doubtless had his faults, and like other leaders, made grave mistakes in the day of battle. He made a schism in the Church of Germany which remains unto this day. He even so far forgot himself and his monastic vows *as to get married*, and last, but not least, he once came into such close proximity to the devil (we have his own word for it) that to rid himself of the arch-fiend he threw his ink-horn at his Satanic Majesty, and the stains upon the wall of his dwelling remain even to this day.

We admit that his was a battle-voice that sounded round the world, and still sounds; and yet we may not, with Carlyle, work ourselves into ecstasies over *all* he did and said. We may even dare to question or demur at the above author's dictum "that Luther's mission was to *work* an epic poem, not to write one." Nevertheless it must be admitted that amid unceasing tumult, theological and political, Luther stood like a lion in defence of honest reforms in the church, and for freedom of conscience, and the right of private judgment.

Martin Luther presents strange and diverse characteristics, being sometimes bigoted, egotistical, and uncompromising, and again being

charitable, tender, pathetic, and even gay. Friend and foe must admit that he was a brave and withal good-natured man, possessing good, common sense,—“the mark of all the valid minds.”

The life of Dr. Luther was crowded with adventure that tested mind and body, and yet we have ample evidence to show that he possessed an almost inexhaustible stock of good nature and rugged wit. His inner life has been given to the world (though against his wishes) and what this Augustinian monk said and did, the world will never be allowed to forget.

And this brings us to look a little into his style of humor. Luther's wit would not be apt to be classical, or over-refined,—the times did not call for, or evolve, that style of thing, at least not in Germany. Critics are not wanting who have dubbed him coarse, vulgar, and irreverent; but he seems to have possessed keen perception, and withal a taste for homely wit and humor.

Luther's wit, like everything else about him, bore the stamp of individuality, and so we find him always calling a spade a spade. He was nothing if not outspoken.

Let us sample his with. On one occasion he ventured to rebuke a certain nobleman, and in no very gentle or round-about way either. This courtier had become notorious for hoarding money,—utterly disregarding God's laws or the wants of his fellow men. Conversing with the

Duke John Frederick on "the Gospel," the nobleman, even in Luther's presence, was heard to say, "The gospel *is nothing to you.*" This aroused the lion-spirit of the Reformer, and he uttered this parable and said: "The lion made a great feast, and invited all the beasts; among others a sow was invited. When all manner of costly dishes were set before the guests the sow said, '*is there any bran here?*' Even so," he continued, "is it with the Epicureans of to-day. We preachers place before them in our churches the most costly dainties—eternal blessings, but these, like swine, turn up their snouts and *grub for money.*"

To Martin Luther we are indebted for that pithy proverb: "A lie is like a snow ball,—the longer one rolls it the larger it grows."

Speaking of the critical spirit in those days he said: "The faults of a preacher are quickly observed. If a pious preacher has *ten* virtues and but *one* fault, the fault obscures all the virtues. Dr. Jonas has *all* the virtues of a preacher, but, because he often 'A-hems A-hems' in the pulpit, the people will not endure the good man."

Here is a *bonmot* containing both sense and wit. One at a distance sent a message to Luther inquiring whether baptism might be administered with *warm water*? "Tell the blockhead that *water is water* whether cold or hot."

Here is a characteristic hint on *cheerfulness*. Says he: "The devil is a sad spirit, and he makes people sad, and therefore cannot endure joyful-

ness. This is the reason he flees away at the sound of music." He might have added that especially does the devil flee at the sweet music of a merry laugh.

Perhaps ladies take exception (with some show of reason) at the fun the Reformer "poked" at Kate, his wife. He rallied her often on her weaknesses, those most common to woman everywhere. On one occasion after she had been "lecturing" or "preaching" at him for some shortcoming he said: "Did you say the Lord's prayer before preaching? Women," he continued, "do not pray before they preach, for if they did, *they would leave off preaching.*"

We incline to the opinion that only *one* person was able to subdue the mighty Luther, and that person was his wife, for on one occasion he gave utterance to certain words that are not only rather *funny*, but a little pathetic, when he said: "Were I to marry again, I should carve an obedient woman out of stone, for I despair of otherwise finding obedience in woman." Oh woman! Ever triumphant through either smiles—or tears. Thy victory is complete—man is vanquished. The champion of the Reformation, who could face even devils at Worms is subdued. How are the mighty fallen! Who can ever hope in these later days to contend with "the new woman"? Man, deluded man, who once gloried in "the subjection" of woman, this is thy bitter lesson. Go learn what the old couplet meaneth—its worst ingredi-

ents are today made even more bitter.

"If she *will*, she will, you may depend on't;
And if she *won't*, she won't—and there's an end on't."

The other chief example of the humorous reformer who shall serve to illustrate our theme is "Honest Hugh Latimer." He used dry wit in the pulpit and was in the habit of preaching "up to date" sermons on every-day topics. Perhaps the average minister would "learn a thing or two" if he "thumbed" honest Hugh a little more for humor and point. His homely thrusts provoked a smile—but they made their mark—and today many a parson could do much worse than "peruse" for style and thought the brave, terse, and "live" utterances of the grand old reforming divine.

Hugh Latimer, Bishop of Worcester, was the son of a farmer and was born in 1491 at Thurcaston in Leicestershire. He was the only son of a family of seven. At the age of fourteen he went to Cambridge, and at the age of twenty-four took the degree of M. A., and was ordained a priest of the Church of England. His religious zeal and unmistakable purity of life were so conspicuous that he soon became known and trusted, and the University elected him one of the twelve preachers appointed annually. With all the energy of his nature he at once entered into what we should call today genuine mission, or slum work—toiling among the degraded in prisons, and among the sick outside, and also frequently and publicly

preaching "on the needs of Christendom."

Bilney, it is said, led him to see the ecclesiastical errors and "accretions" of the times, but when Latimer undertook to preach "the new doctrines," though in reality they were as old as the church of God, he was repressed—the Bishop of the diocese forbade Latimer to preach, at all. In spite of this sort of opposition from certain quarters he was made Chaplain to Henry VIII who presented him with a rectorship and then a Bishopric. Latimer, like a good many Court favorites found out that men "should not put their trust in princes." He somehow displeased his royal master, and at the time of Henry's death was in disgrace.

With the accession of Edward VI to the throne, Latimer again came into power, and used his best efforts to purify the Church of his love and homage.

Whether addressing the polished collegians, or addressing the common people at St. Paul's Cross, Latimer was the same quaint and original preacher; "hitting home" in a most pertinent way, ever making the nominal Christian and hypocrite tremble and the *sincere* man to rejoice. He had an immense influence for good, and the Church of England owes him a great debt of gratitude. His style can be gathered from the sermons on "The Card."—"And for because I cannot give unto you Christ's rule at one time, I will apply myself according to your custom at

Christmas, and whereas you are wont to celebrate Christmas in playing cards, *I intend by God's grace to deal unto you Christ's cards*, wherein you shall perceive Christ's rule. The game that we will play at shall be called 'the triumph,' which if it be well played at, he that *dealeth* shall win, the *players* shall likewise win, and the *standers* and *lookers on* shall do the same, insomuch that there is no man that is willing to play at this 'triumph,' with these cards, but they shall be all winners and no losers." That was the Bishop's way of preaching on a topic of the times. He continues: "Now then, take ye this first card which must appear and be showed unto you, as followeth. You have heard what was spoken to men of the old law, 'Thou shalt not kill, but I say unto you who-so is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the council.' This card was made and spoken by Christ. What requireth Christ of a Christian man? Now turn up your trump, *your heart*, (hearts is trump) and cast your trump—your *heart* on the card; learn that the Christ requireth you not to be angry, not moved to ire against your neighbour."

Speaking of the armor of God he says: "Be ye therefore armed at all points, with the armor of God, that ye may stand strongly against the assaults of the devil. That ye may *stand*," saith he, "ye must stand in this battle *and not sit*, nor lie along, for he that lieth is trodden under foot of the enemy. We may not *sit*, that is, rest in

sin. Think you not too that our enemy, the devil, this prince with all his potentates, hath great and sore assaults to lay against our armor? He hath great pieces of ordnance and artillery, mighty kings and emperors to shoot against God's people, such as Nero the great tyrant; yea, what great pieces hath he had of Bishops of Rome, who have destroyed whole cities and countries and have slain and burnt many! *What great guns were these!*"

Preaching at Convocation he said: "The World is father of many children, not by the first creation and work, but by imitation of love;.. he that hath the devil for his father must needs have devilish children."

In a remarkable sermon on "The Plough"—God's plough, he gave his brethren of the clergy, who neglected their spiritual duties, a severe thrust saying: "How many such prelates, how many such bishops, Lord, for Thy mercy, have we in England?" Then perhaps observing the look of pleasure on the faces of his "lay" auditors, he gives them a word in due season that makes *them wince*, and laugh on the other side of their face, as the saying is. "What shall I say of these rich citizens of London? Shall I call them *proud* men of London, *merciless* men of London, *mercenary* men of London? No! No! I may not do that, they will be offended with me; yet must I speak. What ado was there made in London at a certain man who said, 'Burgesses, nay butterflies.'"

Some of the clergy of Latimer's time were in receipt of great incomes, but they did not visit their parishes or cures often. To such he said: "The preaching of the Word of God is called *meat*—Scripture calleth it *meat*—*not strawberries* that come but once a year and tarry not long. Many make a strawberry of it, ministering to their congregations but once a year."

To certain prominent ecclesiastics, who seized on good secular positions, as ambassadors, or comptrollers of the mint, the good man bravely said in his teaching: "Well, well, is this the calling? Is this the duty? Is it meet that a priest should control the mint? I would here ask one question. Who controlleth the devil at home in his parish while he controlleth the mint?" There was no answer to such homely thrusts.

The two examples dwelt upon must suffice to illustrate this part of our theme, and we conclude the chapter with a humorous "fragment" from Dr. Cheney, Bishop of Gloucester. And another from the famous Bishop Andrewes. The former was not altogether satisfied with the teaching of the Reformers and says: "These new writers in matters of controversy, as Mr. Calvin and others, agree not together, but are at dissension among themselves, and are together by the ears; therefore, take heed of them. Yet read them; for in opening the text they do pass many of the old fathers, and they are excellently well learned in the tongues; but in matters now in controversy

follow them, not, but follow the old fathers and doctors, though Mr. Calvin denies some of them. As for your new doctors, it is good to *pick a salad out of them, now and then*. 'Scriptures. Scriptures,' do you cry? Be not too hasty; for so the the heretics always cried. I would ask this question: I have to do with an heretic, I bring Scripture against him, and he will confess it to be Scripture, but he will deny the sense that I bring for it; how, now, how shall this be tried? Marry, by the fathers only, and not by others. In reading the Scriptures, be you *like a snail*, which is a goodly figure; for when he feels a hard thing against his horns, he pulls them in again. So do you; read Scriptures, in God's name; but when you come to matters of controversy, go back again, *and pull in your horns*." Bishop Andrewes was born on Tower Hill in 1555. He had little influence beyond that of his merit, and scorned all his life to ask for anything for himself. Queen Elizabeth was the first to offer him a bishopric, but he refused it because Her Majesty had appropriated part of the revenue. Under James I he accepted his first See, and became Lord High Almoner and a member of the Privy Council. Nevertheless, when the monarch asked him and Bishop Neale of Durham whether the King had not the right to take his subjects' money without consent of Parliament, Andrewes, after his reverend colleague had replied in the affirmative, simply said, "It is lawful for your Majesty

to take my brother Neale's money, because he offers it."
Bishop Andrewes was one of the men to whom, in 1607, the making of the Authorized Version of the Bible was entrusted.

Chapter VII.

Odd Moments with Dean Swift.

"Few are qualified to shine in company; but it is in most men's power to be agreeable. The reason, therefore, why conversation runs so low at present, is not the defect of understanding; but pride, vanity, ill-nature, affectation, singularity, positiveness, or some other vice, the effect of a wrong education."—*Jonathan Swift*.

JONATHAN SWIFT, though of English descent, was born in Ireland, Nov. 30th, 1667, and it is said he never forgave Ireland for that very occurrence—an indignity he considered it. And perhaps this accounts for the dislike he ever bore the Emerald Isle.

Swift came of a good Yorkshire family. Rev. Thomas Swift, Jonathan's grandfather, was Vicar of Goodrich. Jonathan's father, for whom he was named, was the sixth of ten sons, and this fact is recorded in the following remarkable lines:

"Jonathan Swift
Had the gift,
By fatherige, motherige,
And by brotherige,
To come from Gotheridge."

This was intended for *poetry*, and fell from a "great light" in the time of good Queen Anne.

Jonathan went to school at Kilkenny (that name so suggestive of fighting) and he afterwards attended *Trinity* College, Dublin, where he was described "as wild, and witty, and poor,"—a *trinity* of good and evil—of vice and virtue. He decided on the clerical profession, and failing to obtain an English living, accepted the parish of Laracor, and thus commenced one of the most remarkable and unique careers that English literature contains.

Other and abler pens have written biographically and from the standpoint of the literateur. Our purpose is to focus for our readers a few of the briefly witty and clever things he said at different times. These are not nearly so numerous as one might imagine, for aside from his principal works which were written in his own inimitable way and of course were brilliant, satirical, and caustic, it remains true that the brighter "nothings" either were never very plentiful, or they have been lost for ever. Among later writers, Leslie Stephen recounts a few, and Mr. Moriarty a few more.

In speaking of Swift's character it seems necessary to say that those writers who have tried to make him appear "a saint" must, in the light of the latest investigation, be written down as flatterers. As Mr. Moriarty says in his able and thorough work on the literary side of Swift,

"I have contented myself with the explanation of motives, without offering any comment thereon; . . . my view differs considerably from that of certain modern writers. The latter in a spirit of reaction against the sombre and somewhat inaccurate picture drawn of Swift by Thackeray and M. Taine, have all but tried to raise him to the rank of a saint and a hero."

It is best then to dwell on the genius of Swift, *the master of irony*, rather than on those characteristics that distinguish him as a man and a priest. He tells us himself that the keynote of his career is given in the sentence annexed: "All my endeavours to distinguish myself were only for want of a great title and fortune, that I might be used like a lord; and so the reputation of wit and great learning does the office of a blue ribbon, or a coach and six." This kind of life motto hardly agrees with our modern notions regarding either a saint or a hero.

The famous Dean of St. Patrick's had an exceedingly sharp tongue, yet in spite of this he succeeded in making himself society's favorite, or more exactly speaking, its *dictator*. No one had the temerity to question his supremacy. When he spoke the simple and the gentle alike listened with both their ears. It was never safe to thwart, or contradict him, for he had a sledgehammer-like wit that pounded to atoms every thing that it chanced to come down upon. On this account, and from his political attitude, it

came to pass that he was always more feared than loved. The clergy even shared in this feeling. So he left them very much to themselves, and ridiculed "the cloth" in the following fashion:

"A clergyman of special note
For shunning others of his coat;
Which made his brethren of the gown
Take care betimes to run him down."

His long continued poverty and struggles, together with much neglect and "an intermittent and distressing malady," preyed upon his mind and embittered him, and in spite of his wit and genius he got so melancholy as to wail out: "Happiness is a perfect possession of being well deceived." It is true he was bitter and scornful, but he broke away from this morbid melancholy at times, and managed to bring happiness to others.

One thing is undeniable,—he had a mighty genius and marvelous wit, of its kind. When nearing the end of his pilgrimage, and mentally "lost to himself," and the world, the light flashed up for an instant, and he said with perfect truth, looking at a copy of the "*Tale of a Tub*," "Good God! what a genius I had when I wrote that book." Of this work Johnson (who at first refused to believe Swift was the author) said: "There is such a vigor of mind, such a swarm of thoughts, so much of nature, and art, and life."

Take as an illustration a single extract from that book which so utterly routs pretension and pedantry. He is describing man, and insists

that he is to be classified as "Micro-coat." "If" says he, "one of the suits of clothes called animals be trimmed up with a gold chain and a red gown and a white rod and a pert look, it is called a Lord Mayor; if certain ermines and furs be placed in a certain position we style them *a judge*; and so an apt conjunction of lawn and black satin we entitle *a bishop*." "*The Battle of the Books*" and "*The Tale of a Tub*" were both written in 1697, and published together seven years later. "*The Battle of the Books*" is an expression of contempt for pedants of whom in some respects Swift was chief, but like most men he was blind to his own defects, and that too in spite of the exact "rules" he drew up early in life for his guidance in various ways. That most remarkable work "*Gulliver's Travels*" (*) was given to the world later. An Irish Bishop, with a solemn air said: "The book was full of improbable lies." The bishop took the thing seriously. Some people fall into that error still—even in America—and fail for years "to see where the joke comes in." Like the ecclesiastic above mentioned they say of our exaggerated humor, "*for my part I hardly believe a word of it.*"

Swift's ironical wit was not so bright and airy, nor so spontaneous as that of some, but it had a remarkable force and directness. His hu-

(*) Swift received one thousand dollars for this book, and this was all he made personally. The copyrights of his others writings were given to needy friends.

mor craved practical demonstration, that is to say, he enjoyed a practical joke—a jest literally translated. On one occasion, having inaugurated daily prayers in the parish church at Laracor, (to which nobody came) he addressed his clerk and *factotum* in a somewhat unusual way, interpolating into the “Exhortation” of Matins the words “Dearly beloved ‘Roger,’ the Scripture moveth *you and me*, in sundry places, to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins, etc.”

Dean Swift was never credited with being “righteous overmuch,” yet he performed all public religious offices with fidelity, and in a most reverent and proper manner. One of his friends who spent six months in the Dean’s house afterwards mentioned the fact that he had been that length of time in the family without finding out that the Dean always read family prayers with his domestics at a set time.

From certain literary indications we find that he was pretty well acquainted with the lives of his dependants, and was not too great a man to let them know it, nor too far above them to lack interest in their welfare. “Sweetheart,” he said to an ugly cook, “take this joint of meat down to the kitchen, and *do it less*.” “That is impossible,” she replied. “Then if you must commit faults, commit faults that can be mended.” This was a practical way of showing the girl the necessity of doing her best in things great and small—a lesson that all should learn.

On another occasion a male servant who excused himself from not cleaning certain shoes "because they would be soon dirty again," had to be joked with practically until he saw the fallacy of his own argument, for the Dean insisted that he apply *the same principle to eating breakfast, which custom was only a temporary remedy for hunger.*

Though occasionally a friend of his fellow men in the clerical profession, he could at times administer a stinging rebuke to any whom he thought needed it. For instance, he was once traveling through a rural part of England, some leagues from "London town," and from some cause found it necessary to "stay over night" somewhere in the vicinity. He looked up the parson of the place, who of course invited him to partake of his fraternal hospitality. The dean was quite willing to do so, and the next day being Sunday accompanied his host to Church, there to hear from the rural parson (who did not know his guest) a sermon which he (the Dean) immediately recognized as his own creation. It was delivered too without a word of acknowledgment. When the service was over the two returned to the Rectory, when Dean Swift quietly asked his reverend brother how long it had taken him to write that sermon. "Oh!" said the other, "I wrote it in about two hours." "Did you indeed?" said Swift. "Why, it took *me* over two months to write that very sermon."

Dean Swift was quite a rhymster, and during

the controversy in Ireland over "The Repeal of the Sacramental Test on Irish Protestant Dissenters" he wrote against a Sergeant Bettesworth, a leader of the Irish bar and a Member of Parliament. Of course the Dean hated him because he was openly in favor of toleration. Bettesworth had added fuel to the fire of Swift's wrath by dubbing one of Swift's friends "his brother Singleton." So Swift wrote:

"Thus at the bar, the booby Bettesworth,
Though half a crown o'er pays his sweat's worth,
Who knows in law nor text nor margin,
Calls Singleton his *brother-Sergeant*."

Bettesworth was furious and rushed first to the Deanery, and then not finding his enemy at home "caught him" dining at another clergyman's house. Then ensued the following dialogue well described by Mr. Moriarty. "Swift left the table and met him (Bettesworth) in another room. 'Dr. Jonathan Swift, Dean of St Patrick's, I am Sergeant Bet-tes-worth!' he roared in his most bullying tones. 'Sergeant,' answered the Dean, affecting utter ignorance of his visitor, '*of what regiment, pray?*' It was a crushing hit, *and the Sergeant fell.*"

This chapter of "odd moments" may fittingly close with a few quotations from the Dean's writings that are witty and wise.

"You must know, Mr. Dean, that I set up for a wit," said an upstart who prided himself on saying pert things. "Do you so?" said the Dean,

"take my advice *and sit down again.*"

"Mr. Dean, the trade of Ireland," was the toast at a Sheriff's banquet. Said the Dean, significantly, "Sir,—*I drink no memories.*"

"We have just enough religion to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one another."

"When a true genius appears in the world, you may know him by this, that the dunces are all in confederacy against him."

"Augustus meeting an ass with a lucky name, foretold himself good fortune; *I meet many asses, but none of them have lucky names.*"

"How is it possible for men to expect mankind to take advice, when they will not so much as take warning?"

"The chameleon, which is said to live on nothing but air, hath of all animals the nimblest tongue."

"The reason why so few marriages are happy, is, because young ladies spend their time in *making nets*, not in *making cages.*"

"Censure is the tax a man pays to the public for being eminent."

"The common fluency of speech in many men, and most women, is owing to a *scarcity of matter*, and a *scarcity of words*, for whoever is a master of language, and hath a mind full of ideas, will be apt in speaking to hesitate in the choice of both; whereas common speakers have only *one set of ideas* and *one set of words* to clothe them in, and these are always ready at the mouth. So people

come faster out of a church when it is almost empty, than when a crowd is at the doors."

"When company hath met, I often have observed that persons discover by some accident that they were bred together at the same school or University, after which the rest (of the company) are condemned to silence, and to listen while these two are refreshing each other's memory with the arch tricks and passages of themselves and their comrades."

"Men are content to be laughed at *for their wit*, but not for *their folly*."

"If a man compels me to *keep my distance*, the comfort is, *he keeps his* at the same time."

"Although men are accused for not knowing their own weakness, yet perhaps as few know their own strength."

"A person was asked at court, what he thought of an ambassador and his train, who were all embroidery and lace, full of bows, cringes, and gestures; he said, it was Solomon's importation, gold and apes."

"Most sorts of diversion in men, children, and other animals, is an imitation of fighting."

"Politics, as the word is commonly understood, is nothing but corruptions, and consequently of no use to a good king or a good ministry; for which reason Courts are so overrun with politics."

"Old men and comets have been revered for the same reason: their long beards, and pretences to foretell events."

"A nice man is a man of nasty ideas."

"Apollo was held the god of physic and sender of diseases. Both were originally the same trade, and still continue."

"Kings are commonly said to have *long hands*; I wish they had *as long ears*."

"Princes in their infancy, childhood, and youth are said to discover prodigious parts and wit, to speak things that surprise and astonish. Strange, so many hopeful princes, and so many shameful kings! If they happen to die young, they would have been prodigies of wisdom and virtue. If they live, they are often prodigies indeed, but of another sort."

"An idle reason lessens the weight of the good ones you gave before."

"The motives of the best actions will not bear too strict an inquiry. It is allowed that the cause of most actions, good or bad, may be resolved into the love of ourselves: but the self-love of some men inclines them to please others, and the self-love of others is wholly employed in pleasing themselves."

"Invention is the talent of youth, and judgment of age; so that our judgment grows harder to please when we have fewer things to offer it: this goes through the whole commerce of life. When we are old, our friends find it difficult to please us, and are less concerned whether we be pleased or no."

"No wise man ever wished to be younger."

"I have known some men possessed of good qualities, which were very serviceable to others, but useless to themselves; like a sun-dial on the front of a house, to inform the neighbours and passengers, but not the owner within."

"Satire is reckoned the easiest of all wit, but I take it to be otherwise in very bad times; for it is as hard to satirize well a man of distinguished vices, as to praise well a man of distinguished virtues. It is easy enough to do either to people of moderate characters."

Chapter VIII.

Sydney Smith, the Prince of Clerical Wits.

“There is no more interesting spectacle than to see the effects of wit upon the different characters of men; than to observe it expanding caution, relaxing dignity, unfreezing coldness—teaching age, and care, and pain to smile—extorting reluctant gleams of pleasure from melancholy; genuine and innocent wit like this is surely the flavor of the mind.”—*Sydney Smith*.

IF humor be wit and love, then Sydney Smith is justly entitled to the most exalted place among clerical wits. It does one good to study the “counterfeit presentment” of the man. Even after many days his portrait even seems to give a true index of the man, for “as a man thinks, so is he.” Those good natured features seem to tell of good living, and boundless good nature, wedded to culture and intellectuality.

We confess to a profound admiration for this many-sided and withal charming character to whom it was said by Lord Dudley: “You have been laughing at me for the last seven years, and yet, in all that time you never said a single thing to me I wished *unsaid*.” What a tribute! How many men in Church or State ever received a nobler tribute? Of how many (*without wit*) can it be

said that they have not lacerated, or at least punctured, human hearts with "the unruly member"?

The average man in a world where it seems that "offences must needs come," can only partially take in the full import of such a eulogium as that conferred on Rev. Sydney Smith by that "live" Lord whom he had again and again assailed with the bright shaft of his kindly wit, so gently "shot" however that it did "no hurt," but rather good to the party laughed at. And what was true of Lord Dudley was also true of all sorts and conditions of men at whom Sydney Smith laughed continually for many years. Wonderful man! Who else could do this without giving offence? What a beneficent work to "extort reluctant gleams of pleasure from melancholy,"—and this he did without money and without price, simply for the love of it.

The chief incidents of his life are soon narrated. Sydney Smith was born at Woodford, Essex, June 3, 1771. He was educated at Winchester and New College, Oxford. In 1794 he left College and was ordained, being made curate of Nether Avon. In 1800 he (although nothing but a curate) did a most unheard-of thing; he actually decided to marry, and he did marry. In 1802 he, in conjunction with Brougham, Jeffrey, and others, started "The Edinburgh Review."

In 1807 he left Edinburgh for London, and became preacher at the Foundling Hospital, and

Lecturer on Moral Philosophy at the Royal Institution. It was in this year that he became Rector of Foston-Le-Clay, Yorkshire, and it was here that he wrote the well known "Peter Plymley" letters. In 1808 he was made Canon of Bristol, and in 1829 Rector of Combe Florey. In the year 1833 he became Canon-Residentiary of St. Paul's Cathedral, London. This was the full extent of preferment for the famous clerical joker. Certainly that measure of preferment neither represented his popularity nor intrinsic merit, for, as often happens, much higher things than those that fell to his lot were bestowed upon less popular and less gifted men.

More than half a century has passed away, but the world is not beginning to be "tired" of his sayings. In proof of this watch a crowd of intelligent men when the formula "As Sydney Smith says," greets the ear. Much wit and humor has sunk into the grave of oblivion, but Sydney Smith's jokes are still in evidence. Other Jokers' *bonmots* are lost, or "laid up in lavender" in silent libraries, forgotten, but every now and then our merry clerical wit's "good things" are again "served up" to a generation of men and women who are very much like the Athenians who spent their time in nothing else, but to either *tell* or *hear* some *new thing*.

Some wits have laughed *at* men, but Sydney Smith laughed *with* them, and was not above laughing at *himself*. Genuine, almost rollicking

wit was his, yet without taint of either bad manners, or bad morals. Jerrold describes him most aptly: "His talk is a torrent of wit, fun, nonsense, pointed remark, just observation, and happy illustration. *No stain of impurity ever sullied his blade.*"

Another trait of Smith's was that he did not (like so many public men) wear a mask in the presence of the world. Some men who have lived in the public glare have been known to reserve all their good humor, their jokes and smiles *for public use alone*,—letting out their pent up ill nature in private. Sydney Smith, be it remembered, was never happier than when propounding jokes and wreathing smiles for the amusement of his wife and daughters in the quiet of his own parsonage. This is very well illustrated by a little episode that happened at Combe Florey. The family were at breakfast in the library, when a poor woman came, begging Mr. Smith to hasten to christen a little infant which was supposed to be dying. He instantly left the table, hurried to the cottage home, performed his duty, and on his return was asked by his family how he had left the little one. "Why," said he, "I just gave it a dose of castor oil, and then I christened it. So *now the poor child is ready for either world.*"

We cannot but admire Sydney Smith for the display of the manly courage he ever displayed in fighting the battle of life, more particularly while he was still an unknown parson in an obscure hamlet. One naturally contrasts his op-

timistic and buoyant attitude in life with that of Swift, who, when similarly situated, fretted and fumed, and bitterly execrated Church and State, and nearly all humanity, but Smith said in the darkest day, "I am resolved not to whine." That was his motto, and, best of all, he practiced what he preached. His philosophy comes to us potent with the spell of a daily and hourly achievement of his own ideal. What a splendid life-motto is his—for any man. "If it be my lot to *fly*, I will fly with alacrity; if to *crawl*, I will crawl contentedly; but as long as I can avoid it, I will never be unhappy."

If people would try to resist melancholy, the monotony, dullness, and gloom of daily life would in large measure disappear. I hear of many giving advice, but who has a better program than this which bids us "resist melancholy steadily, for it is a *habit*, that encroaches more and more." We need not take his twenty-two recipes for its cure. The following two or three will be sufficient, at least for the fair sex. *He* once gave a lady the following recipe. *One* thing was always to have a bright fire in winter. *Another*, to remember all the pleasant things said to and of her. *Another*, to keep a box of sugar-plums on the mantel, and a kettle simmering on the hearth. These are "little things," you say, but of such life is made up in large part, at least for the many.

We have already referred to Smith's delightful attack on the popular notion "that seriousness

is the passport to success in life." In his day people believed it religiously. The species still remains among us. Not long since a writer in *Macmillan's Magazine* called attention to this wrong condition of things, observing that there is a tendency to regard a light humor as *something dangerous*, which, like a *bomb*, may explode at any moment with serious consequences if one happens to be in the way.

It is to be regretted that the false standards of conventionality should still continue to "hood wink" the unthinking,—and yet your solemn faced man, or he of grim pomposity, is too often overestimated, and because he assumes an air of gravity, he is too often credited with amazing judgment and worth. Appearances are deceptive. (*)

We still laud and magnify silent dullness and even bald stupidity, if it *looks wise*. Men worship at the shrine of bogus profundity and make believe learning. In following his convictions and being true to himself Sydney Smith, like other witty men, felt that he took some risk because so

(*) A man may *look* thickheaded and yet not be dull, and a lesson can be learned from the experience of a learned English Judge who is described in the "*London Home News*," as follows:

By way of a little recreation the learned judge, Sir Henry Hawkins, found himself in a rough crowd at a sporting event, and recognized one "rough," who was hustling him severely, as a criminal who had been up before him. Thinking that the man would perhaps be terrorized into civility if he learned whom he was hustling, Mr. Justice Hawkins raised his hat, disclosing his familiar close-cropped hair, and said, "Perhaps you know who I am, my man!" The rough took one glance at that bullet-shaped, bull-dog face and head—"S'welp me bob," said he in an awed whisper, "*a bloomin' prize-fighter!*" and vanished.

many people, *conservative people*, are afraid that the wit will "go off" at the wrong time, and explode under their fashions, fads, or foibles,—*and perhaps they are right*. The pity of it is that to be-fool the public, and sometimes to gain some prize in life, the temptation is to cater to this popular weakness and to stoop to unreality by conforming to a false code,—masquerading in wooden, and orthodox gravity.

It is some comfort to remember that the Atlantic has again and again proven itself to be a veritable Ocean Graveyard, not in a nautical, but in a metaphorical way; that is to say, some of the old foggy notions labeled European and Conservative, have never survived the rough passage, but like some undesirable emigrants—they never "landed." Unfortunately for the wit, the one that affects him still survives. It reached these shores somehow, but we live in hope that "young America" will bury it decently, and so deep, that it may have no resurrection.

Much interest attaches in this glorious country to "genealogies." These are days of "looking up our ancestry." What has the wit to boast of in this line? He has nothing to be ashamed of. Wit has a right honorable ancestry, for had not Athens its Club of Wits, meeting every week in the Temple of Hercules? And did not kings send for the chronicles of their jokes—the "Book of the Sixty"?

Of course, it is to be expected that pomposity,

and big-wig-ism will dislike and fear the wit, and will in self-defence try to depreciate and humiliate him. That is the way of the world, for mediocrity, inflation and conceit are within the reach of the many, but originality, intellectuality, and wit are the natural heritage of the few.

Inflated vanity, conceit, or pompous pride naturally oppose wit and humor, which, by their inherent nature, reveal their little secrets, and expose their defects, and are hated accordingly. The wit himself shares to some extent the same fate, and this held good in Smith's case, for of him it was truly said, "No man could wear a big wig, or strut in pomposity in his presence." As an illustration of this we may refer to the occasion when a learned, but tiresome bore was dwelling at inordinate length upon the great size of a fly's eye, compared with its bulk. When the "scientist" had about bored them to the verge of desperation, our hero, to the amazement of all present, suddenly turned to the great man, and flatly contradicted his statements, quoting triumphantly as a justification of his remark the famous words from the death of Cock Robin:

"I, said the fly,
With my little eye,—
I saw him die."

Sydney Smith feared neither birth, rank, nor any other earthly distinction. It is a well known fact that Lord Macaulay was an incorrigible talker, though an exceedingly brilliant one. At one

of the poet Rogers' breakfasts Smith is reported to have said to his host "I wish I could write poetry like you, Rogers; I would write an *Inferno*, and would put Macaulay among a lot of disputants—and gag him."

Our celebrated wit was always ready to befriend the clergy, and was so benevolent and disinterested a friend as to act as critic of their public utterances—a by no means thankful task for any parson. A young clergyman once came tremblingly to the Canon of St. Paul's asking how he (the Canon) had liked his preaching. "Well, if you must know," he said, "I like you better in the *bottle*, than in the *barrel*."

The witty Canon never forgot the days he had spent in "Obscuredom," and always argued that no matter how small a curate's stipend might be, he still had feelings as sensitive and acute as a Lord-Bishop, and resented being *trod upon* as much as any great dignitary.

No man understood and gauged human nature more accurately than our famous wit. Preaching for a charitable institution he frequently repeated the assertion that the English people were most distinguished for generosity, and the love of their species. Unfortunately the amount of the offering did not seem to justify such an assertion, and being much less than he had expected he remarked that he had evidently made a mistake in the pulpit. What he should have said was that the English were distinguished for a

love of their *specie*.

Mr. Smith had no very high regard for the stingy Churchman, and said: "The liberality of Churchmen, generally, is like the quantity of matter in a cone; both get less and less as they move higher and higher."

Smith was not indifferent to the evils in the church,—some of which could be traced to the imperfections of the clergy. Of a preacher ~~noted~~ for his dull sermons the wit said: "He evidently thought sin was to be taken from man—as Eve was from Adam—by casting him into a deep ~~sleep.~~"

The Canon was not even afraid of a Lord-Bishop, and those were days of "Bishop-worship." Walking with the Lord-Bishop of Exeter, he saw a sign over a store with this lettering plainly painted thereon: "Tongues cured here." Turning to the "Chief Shepherd" he quietly said: "Shall we walk in, my Lord?"

Speaking of Bishops reminds us of an elegant piece of sarcasm he once indulged in: "It is a great proof of shyness to crumble your bread at dinner. I do it when I sit by the Bishop of London, *and with both hands when I sit by the Archbishop of Canterbury.*"

Someone asked Smith if a certain well-known Bishop was not about to marry. "Perhaps he may," was the reply, "yet how can a *Bishop* marry? How can he flirt? The most he can say is:—'I—will—see—you—in—the—vestry—after

service.'"

Bishop Wilberforce describes a most interesting three days spent at Eton at the time of Bishop Selwyn's farewell sermon and departure for his distant Diocese. It was here that Sydney Smith suggested that possibly "cold clergyman" might be served up by the aborigines, adding, "and for myself, my Lord, all I can say is, that when your parishioners *do* eat you, I sincerely hope you may *disagree* with them."

It is said that the great Hallam, a contemporary of Sydney Smith, was a born doubter. Joking about this peculiarity, the latter said: "If Hallam were in the midst of a full assembly of scientific men, and if Euclid were to enter the room with his '*elements*' under his arm, and were to say, 'Gentlemen, I suppose no one present doubts the truth of the forty-fifth proposition of my first book of *Elements*,' Mr. Hallam would say, '*Yes, I have my doubts.*'"

Sydney Smith did not gain great wealth or preferment, but he was always happy and content. He knew something of the "ups and downs" of life, yet he kept "sweet," and ever laughed at Dame Fortune. This chapter may well close with the barest mention of his closing days. When that life of his which he had described in health "as being very much like a razor—either in hot water or a *scrape*"—when that noble and happy life was ebbing away, the wiseacres would naturally predict that his geniality and wit would

no longer sustain themselves; but there the prophets would have prophesied falsely. He *did* retain his gaiety and humor even to the last, and why not? To his nurse who had in some drowsy or unaccountable way administered *ink*, mistaking it for medicine, he called out on detecting the flavor: "*Get me some blotting paper to take.*" To a friend who expressed his grief at finding him so emaciated, he cheerfully said: "There is not enough left of me to make a *curate*." To still another friend who inquired whether he was allowed to eat much, he said something about not being allowed "to eat the wing of a *butterfly*." Thus in cheerful resignation to the will of God, Sydney Smith died as he had lived, the embodiment of brilliancy, wit, learning and piety, and illustrated in both his working creed: "Take short views of life, hope for the best, *and trust in God.*" He passed away in the year 1845.

Chapter IX.

Sample Wit and Wisdom of Sydney Smith.

"When any one sits in company and any merry thought comes into his head, he ought to give utterance to it immediately, so that all present may be benefited."—*Bishop Elphinstone.*

SYDNEY SMITH was a joker, and yet he was not lacking in dignity. He was an approachable man, but could always successfully repel that over-familiarity which a wit is peculiarly subject to. On one occasion a young man, who had only the slightest possible acquaintance with Mr. Smith, took advantage of his being a humorist to address him in offensively familiar terms, calling him before the company "Sydney," but he promptly settled the upstart. The young man happened to say he was going for the first time to the Archbishop's Palace. Here was Mr. Smith's opportunity, and he did not allow it to pass unimproved. Addressing the young man, he said: "Let me give you a little bit of advice; pray don't clap the Archbishop on the back and call him *Howley*."

Smith's politeness and true gallantry are well known. He had the manners (in spite of his name) of the perfect gentleman, the man of society. As a sample of this take the case of the young lady who was vainly trying to reproduce in needle-work a flower. She said: "Oh, Mr. Smith, *I cannot* bring this flower to perfection." With an instinct of chivalry that might have done credit to a Frenchman, he said, taking her by the hand: "Then let me lead *perfection to the flower.*"

Of an old lady friend, who was noted for her amiability, he said "she was perfection,"—and always reminded him of *an aged angel*.

Our prince of clerical jokers with his many excellencies was not a high Churchman. He was born too late to enter into the Oxford revival, even if he had "been made that way." So we are not surprised to find him poking fun at the movement, so much so, that when a lady, who was alarmed at the doings of "the Puseyites," asked him what "Puseyism," so much commented on, really meant, He replied: "Puseyism, Madam, is *posture and imposture, inflexion and genuflexion, bowing to the East and courtesying to the West.*" This is brilliant enough as wit,—but it is not true. Happily the champion Protestants of the Church of England, from Sir William Harcourt to the notorious "publisher and purveyor of bad literature," do not possess the weapons of wit. Their weapons are either letters to the "Times" or "demonstrations" of fellows of the baser sort.

Many of them are men who fear not God, neither regard man, whether Archbishop, Bishop, Priest, or Deacon.

Sydney Smith was not a bigot, and yet he believed the Church of England's "religion" to be the purest in the world. Still, as he said himself, he "was not forced to be silly because he was pious, nor to join eulogiums on his faith, which every man of common reading and common sense could so easily refute." This breadth made him tolerant of certain beliefs that differed radically from his own, and he went so far as to be friendly towards Dissenters if they were not too dreadful.

When a Dr. Blake was quite ill Mr. Smith called upon him, and having inquired as to the state of his health that day, was told that the Doctor "was far from well" and then the patient added: "I sit close by the fire, and yet I cannot keep warm." "I can cure you, Doctor," said his visitor; "*cover yourself over with the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England*, and you will soon have a delicious glow all over you." That kind of theological disputation and converse would go far to bring about at least a living, every-day sort of Christian Unity. The following reply, made to a certain query, *may* strike some as being a trifle uncharitable and narrow, but he meant well, no doubt. It seems a lady had been shocked at the refusal of a Church clergyman to bury a Dissenter with the rites of the Church of England, and

so the lady, to test Mr. Smith, who, report said was more tolerant, told him of the above circumstance, and asked him whether he would refuse to bury such a Dissenter? His characteristic answer was this: "On the contrary, madam, *I should be only too glad to bury them all.*"

An argument arose in which our wit observed how many of the most eminent men of the world had been diminutive in person, and after naming several among the ancients, he added: "Why, look at Jeffery! And there is my little friend D—who has not body enough to cover his mind decently with; his intellect is improperly exposed."

Observing Lord Brougham's carriage in the street, he remarked to a friend, (alluding to the letter "B" surmounted by a coronet) "There goes a carriage with a B outside, and a wasp within." That was about as waspish a remark as our genial Canon ever allowed himself to make.

Smith had wondrous tact and self control under provocation. A lady of title who thought too much of herself, and her "forbears," once asked him who *his* grandfather was? He "crushed" her with the astounding statement "that he had disappeared about the time of the annual Assizes"—and added, "we asked no questions."

Mrs. Longman being about to entertain at dinner two noted entomologists, Smith suggested a menu which should include "flea-pates, earth worms on toast, caterpillars crawling in cream

and removing themselves, etc."

Sydney Smith liked to tell his own "stories." Here is one showing how slow some people are "to take a joke." Mrs. J— called one day and spoke of the oppressive heat. "Heat, Madam!" I said, "it was so dreadful here that I found there was nothing left for it but to take off my flesh and sit in my bones."

"Take off your flesh and sit in your bones, Sir! Oh, Mr. Smith, how could you do that?" she exclaimed with the utmost gravity. "Nothing more easy, ma'am; come and see next time." But she ordered her carriage, and evidently thought it was a very unorthodox proceeding.

Sir Edwin Landseer somewhat patronizingly offered to let Sydney Smith sit to him for his portrait. "Is thy servant a *dog*?" replied Sydney, "that he should do this thing?" Here is another joke told in his own words. "A joke goes a long way in the country. I have known one last pretty well for seven years. I remember making a joke, after a meeting of the clergy in Yorkshire, where there was a Reverend Mr. Buckle who never spoke; when I gave his health saying he was a buckle, without a tongue, most persons within hearing laughed, but my next neighbour sat unmoved and sunk in thought. At last, a quarter of an hour after we had all done, he suddenly nudged me, exclaiming: 'I see *now* what you meant, Mr. Smith; you meant a *joke*.' 'Yes, Sir,' I said, 'I believe I did;' upon which he began

laughing so heartily that I thought he would choke, and I was obliged to pat him on the back."

At one of Rogers' famous breakfasts the conversation turned upon the American way of treating unpopular, or obnoxious citizens. Mr. Smith said to his host: "My dear Rogers, if we were both in the United States, we should be tarred and feathered; and, lovely as we are by nature, I should be an ostrich and you an emu."

Preaching at Edinburgh, Mr. Smith noticed how few men came to Service; so he took for his text, "Oh, that *men* would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men."

When Sydney Smith was unfortunate enough to lose a few hundred pounds by a bad speculation in Pennsylvania bonds, a publisher called one day to see him, offering to retrieve his fortunes, if he would write a three volume novel. This was a temptation indeed, and some clergymen would gladly have gone to work, but Mr. Smith said: "If I do this, I can't travel out of my own line. I must have an Archdeacon for my hero, to fall in love with the pew-opener, with the clerk for a confidant, tyrannical interference of the church-wardens, clandestine correspondence concealed under the hassocks,—appeal to the parishioners, etc."

"All that, Sir," said the publisher, "I would not presume to interfere with; I would leave it entirely to your own inventive genius." "Well, Sir,"

I am not prepared to come to terms at present, but if I ever *do* undertake such a work, you shall certainly have the refusal."

An American said to Mr. Smith: "You are so funny! Do you know, you remind me of our great joker, Dr. Chamberlayne." "I am much honored," Smith replied, "but I was not aware that you had such a functionary in the United States."

Mr. Smith could find material for a clever witticism in the streets, in a drawing room,—everywhere. Passing through a back street behind St. Paul's Cathedral, he heard two coarse women abusing each other from opposite houses, whereupon he remarked: "They will never agree, for they argue *from different premises*."

In a butcher's shop he would have his joke. Before the Canon of Bristol was so well known, and appreciated as a convivialist, and in the days when he often dined, like other ordinary mortals at home, he was in the habit (says one who knew him at Bristol) of selecting his own beef steak off which he frequently dined, while in residence at College Green. On one occasion Mr. Smith had described a circle with his finger from which the man of meat was "to cut and cut boldly," and then having served the cleric he turned to the other customer and asked what he would like. "I'll follow suit," said the gentleman, "the cut next to Mr. Smith's. I can't go wrong with such a precedent." To this little compliment Mr.

Smith replied: "You're a wise man, Sir; this is one of the cases where you can't err if you follow the church, and you'll find your obedience rewarded with a good beefsteak."

Some of Smith's gems of thought are worth preserving. They sparkle with wit, and yet are rich in wisdom and strength. A few taken at random from his lectures, and every-day table talk, are strung together here as beads in a necklace, or flowers in a bouquet.

Of the Court of Chancery he said that it was like a boa-constrictor; it swallowed up the estates of English gentlemen and digested them at leisure.

To Mrs. Grote he said: "Go where you will, do what you please, I have the most perfect confidence in your *indiscretion*."

"Never gamble at the game of life: be content to play for sixpences: marriage is too high a stake for a wise man to risk."

A discussion took place as to whether it was better to read or hear Macauley. Rogers said: "The former, because you need not listen." But Sydney Smith favored the latter saying: "Because you can't dog's ear and interline him, and put him *on the shelf* when he is talking."

Sydney Smith's advice to a writer was: "As a general rule, run your pen through every other word you have written; you have no idea what vigor it will give your *style*."

"When I began to thumb the cushion of my pulpit on first coming to Boston, as is my wont

when I preach, the accumulated dust of a hundred and fifty years made such a cloud, that for some minutes I lost sight of my congregation."

"What a pity it is that in England we have no amusements but vice and religion."

Daniel O'Connell presented Sydney Smith to his friends, saying: "Allow me to introduce to you the ancient defender of our faith."

Mr. Smith laughingly corrected him, saying, "Of your *cause*, if you please, *not* of your *faith*."

"Daniel Webster struck me much like a steam engine in trousers."

"They do nothing in Ireland as they would elsewhere. When the Dublin mail was stopped and robbed, a sweet female voice was heard behind the hedge, exclaiming, 'Shoot the gentleman, then, Patrick dear'"

"Praise is the best diet for us, after all."

"Harrowgate is the most heaven-forgotten country under the sun. When I saw it, there were only nine mangy fir-trees there; and even they all leaned away from it."

"When I praised the author of the '*New Poor Law*' the other day, three gentlemen at the table took it to themselves, and blushed up to the eyes."

"Yes, he has spent all his life in letting down empty buckets into empty wells; and he is frittering away his age in trying to draw them up again."

"The great charm of Sheridan's speaking

was his multifariousness of style."

"Don't mind the caprices of fashionable women; they are as gross as poodles fed on milk and muffins."

"We naturally lose illusions as we get older, like teeth, but there is no Cartwright to fit a new set into our understandings. I have, alas! only one illusion left, and that is the Archbishop of Canterbury."

"Oh, don't read those twelve volumes till they are made into a *consomme* of two. Lord Dudley did still better, he waited *till they blew over*."

"All musical people seem to be happy; it is the most engrossing pursuit: almost the only innocent and unpunished passion."

"A man of small understanding is merry where he can, not where he should. Lightning must, I think, be the wit of heaven."

"Why destroy present happiness by a distant misery, which may never come at all, or you may never live to see it. For every substantial grief has twenty shadows, and most of them, shadows of your own making."

"Did you ever hear my definition of marriage? It is, that it resembles a pair of shears, so joined that they cannot be separated, often moving in opposite directions, yet always punishing any one who comes between them."

"We talk of human life as a journey, but how variously is that journey performed! There are some who come forth girt, and shod and

mantled, to walk on velvet lawns and smooth terraces, where every gale is arrested, and every beam is tempered. There are others who walk on the Alpine paths of life, against driving misery, and through stormy sorrows, over sharp afflictions; walk with bare feet, and naked breast, jaded, mangled and chilled."

"Hardness is a want of minute attention to the feelings of others. It does not arise from malignity or a carelessness of inflicting pain, but from a want of delicate perception of those little things by which pleasure is conferred or pain excited. A hard person thinks he has done enough if he does not speak ill of your relations, your children, or your country; and then, with the greatest good humor and volubility, and with a total inattention to your individual state and position, gallops over a thousand fine feelings, and leaves in every step the mark of his hoofs upon your heart."

"Not only is religion calm and tranquil, but it has an extensive atmosphere around it, whose calmness and tranquility must be preserved, if you would avoid misrepresentation."

"Men are always happier for having been happy: so that if you make them happy now, you make them happy twenty years hence, by the memory of it."

"I have asked several men what passes in their minds when they are thinking; and I could never find any man who could think for two

minutes together. Everybody has seemed to admit that it was a perpetual deviation from a particular path, and a perpetual return to it, which, imperfect as the operation is, is the only method in which we can operate with our minds to carry on any process of thought."

"In spite of all that has been said about the *sweets* of study, it is a sort of *luxury*, like the taste for olives and coffee—not natural, very hard to be acquired, and very easily lost."

"It is imagined that wit is a sort of inexplicable visitation, that it comes and goes with the rapidity of lightning, and that it is quite as unattainable as beauty or just proportion. I am so much of a contrary way of thinking, that I am convinced a man might sit down as systematically, and successfully, to the study of wit, as he might to the study of mathematics, and I would answer for it, that by giving up only six hours a day to being witty he should come on prodigiously before midsummer, so that his friends should hardly know him again."

"There are some men who continue to astonish and please the world, even in support of a bad cause. They are mighty in their fallacies, and beautiful in their errors."

Chapter X.

The Wit of Some Popular Preachers.

"There are things in these sermons that may provoke smiles, but what of them? The preacher is not quite sure about a smile being a sin, and at any rate, he thinks it a less crime to cause a momentary laughter than a half hour's profound slumber."—*Chas. H. Spurgeon.*

IT is obviously impossible within the limits of this book to treat of *all* the popular preachers who in their day did not think it a sin to evoke a smile within or without the house of God. Some of the men we shall refer to electrified their congregations with their eloquence and power. With a sort of literary catholicity we shall ignore nice theological distinctions, and, with rigorous impartiality select certain representative men of widely differing theological views, scholastic attainments, and social position. We shall encounter the rigid Calvinist, who, forgetting the eternal decrees and the precise qualifications of the elect, made good jokes for the enjoyment of those who heard them. Here we shall

meet the Anglican priest (with good credentials) who, for the time being, loses sight of the evils of Dissent, and laughs at, and with, the pastor of the meeting house. Unlike each other in many particulars, the men of whom we write were alike in at least two points—they were of the English-speaking race, and they were all witty:

It is doubtful whether any really original and popular preacher could sustain his reputation with the people if he did not possess in some degree the innate qualities and gifts that, for want of a better classification, we must perforce style wit or humor. At first sight such a statement may seem open to refutation, because all great preachers have not been humorous in the pulpit; but, if we investigate, it will appear that the qualities that have won the public ear have been modifications or blendings of the very qualities for which we argue.

Speaking broadly, it is safe to say that only a few of those preachers, who have been really popular, have been deficient in these subtle gifts. Certainly in the United States the men who have best "reached the masses," have possessed and utilized wit and humor, so that from Sam Jones or Mr. Moody to Henry Ward Beecher there has ever been this element in the make-up of the *people's* preacher. Mr. Beecher wielded for many years an immense influence in this country, and ever preached and practiced a joyful form of religiousness. Mr. Handford, his biographer, says:

"If Mr. Beecher could not have been a joyful Christian, he would not have been a Christian at all. All life was glad to him, and he judged that the Christian life ought to be of all lives the most joyful." Mr. Beecher obtained a world wide reputation as a preacher and lecturer, and his buoyant temperament and marvelous vitality, together with a good store of humor made him a great favorite not only in America but elsewhere.

Mr. Beecher commenced the practical work of the ministry in 1837 at Lawrenceburg, Indiana, with a little flock numbering some twenty members. As the son of his father—the eccentric Lyman Beecher—he might have expected something more important, but he was content and happy in a humble sphere. He swept the church,—as there was no sexton; he lit the lamps,—and probably trimmed them. In his own words: "I did everything except coming to hear myself preach,—that they had to do." The people were not particularly "alive" or earnest, and Beecher found it uphill work. Once measuring up the spiritual element, he said that "nineteen of his members *were women*, and one was—*nothing*."

A little later he was called to Indianapolis, the Capital of the State, where he had a larger field, though not a great income. But here he lived on the best terms with the ministers of the other denominations. He had family afflictions that tended to depress him, but he ever manifested a patient spirit, and while he was hungering for litera-

ture which his great mind craved, but from which he was debarred by narrow means, he did not grumble, but threw himself into the work of the church, and wrote for the local papers on floriculture. He richly enjoyed a joke, and one day, (it was on "blue Monday,") the Episcopal clergyman sent a message in to him, as he was at breakfast, asking for the use of Beecher's horse for an hour or two. At first he acquiesced, but suddenly leaving the table, and following the messenger outside, he accosted the believer in "Apostolic Succession" something after the following strain. Kindly taking the arm of the Episcopal Parson he said: "Brother C——, you want my horse. Well, you see it lies on my mind greatly that you don't admit my ordination as valid. I don't think it's fair. Now, if you'll admit that I'm *a genuinely ordained minister*, you shall have my horse, but if not,—I don't know about it." It is unnecessary to add that the joke was understood, and that the Episcopal divine used the sectarian horse that day at any rate.

"Will you lecture for us for fame?" was the telegram Henry Ward Beecher received from a Young Men's Christian Association in the West. "Yes, F. A. M. E. *Fifty and my expences,*" was the answer.

It has been asserted that Beecher was somewhat vulgar at times and times, and that he was also guilty of many social improprieties,—that he rather gloried in the wanton disregard of the

punctillio of ecclesiastical and social conventionality. Sometimes people called him a mountebank; but is not that a stock objection, raised against any public man who is *original* and dares to employ humor, ridicule, or irony in the pulpit? Such wit or humor may annihilate an unbeliever's argument, or call down upon the vicious in high places, or low, the anathemas of all good men, but the "correct people," the people who delight in pious platitudes, and stale old fogysm in the pulpit, lift up their hands in the holy place and cry—*sensational*

Beecher had his faults; nobody denies that. But he paid the penalty. At the darkest period of his life, during the great scandal, his good humor bubbled up, although he had enough to crush ten ordinary men, and he said, on seeing the efforts his many friends were making to defend and exonerate him: "It was a humane attempt to drag an ass out of a pit."

Referring to his public utterances, his style in the pulpit, it is abundantly evident that he knew how to send his message straight home to the heart, and frequently his sentences were illumined with points of humor.

Being interrupted during public prayer at Plymouth Church, by a crash and the noise of falling glass, the result of stone throwing, he introduced a petition apropos, saying: "Let the mercies of God come to all good men—and to miscreants also."

Being at Chicago on a lecture tour he held forth in an immense building holding 10,000 people. His theme was "Communism" and as he was telling the story of the rise of the people's power—the growth of Democracy, he ended an eloquent period with the quotation, rendered in English "the voice of the people is the voice of God." A breathless, and almost painful stillness ensued for the moment, until the spell was broken, not by the expected cheer, but by the voice of a man who was evidently intoxicated, who hiccupped out "The—voice—of (hic)—the —people—is—the voice—of—a—fool." For a few seconds even Beecher's self-control wavered, but with a great effort he braced himself for the occasion and turned the laugh against *the other man*, saying: "Will some kind person take our friend outside, and give him cold water, *and plenty of it?*"

Mr. Beecher's sermons and addresses often contained bright and humorous thoughts and illustrations. Take, as an example, his homely method of describing the deceitfulness of riches. Speaking of our Lord's dictum that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom he said: "Why, a rich man ought to be like a fire-engine, which sucks in at *one end*, and spouts out at *the other*, putting out the fire of hell which the devil is always kindling." Mr. Beecher, while unlike Mr. Spurgeon in theology, was like him in that he frequently made a point by touching the risible nerve of his auditor. The latter had a remarkable gift of

seizing hold of every-day things and using them in the pulpit. So had Beecher.

Beecher's "views" on good nature, wit and humor can be gathered best from his own random utterances. Here are two or three of his best sayings:

"Don't mope; laugh a good deal; frolic every day; a low tone of mind is unhealthy."

"Having wit and buoyancy of spirits, let them flash out in the service of religion; don't consider it necessary to rake them up and hide them."

"Humor generally tends towards good nature, and everything that tends towards good nature tends towards good grace."

"Don't set out to be a gloomy-eyed, twilight-faced, bat-eyed Christian."

Here are some clever and strong words on a time worn subject, namely, "the responsibilities of the ministry." "People have said to me 'I should think you would shudder when you stand up and confront a vast congregation.' I shudder! What should I shudder for? Do you shudder when you stand up before a garden of flowers? Do you shudder when you go into an orchard of fruit in October?"

"But your care?" "I have no care. *I forget the sermon a great deal quicker than you do.* and every man that is in the ministry and is willing to love men and be faithful to them will find joy in it from day to day."

"I think half of the troubles for which men go

slouching to God in prayer, are caused by their own intolerable pride. Many of our cares are but a morbid way of looking at our privileges. We let our blessings *get mouldy* and then call them *curses*."

"A great many religious men are not happy, and a great many irreligious men *are* happy. To say that a man can enjoy more in a religious life than he can in a lower life is to say the truth."

"Some people think *black* is the color of heaven, and that the more they can make their faces look like midnight, the more evidence they have of grace. But God, who made the sun and the flowers, never sent me to proclaim to you such a lie as that. We are told to 'rejoice in the Lord alway.' What then? 'And again I say, rejoice.'"

We turn now to another remarkable preacher, Charles H. Spurgeon, whose sermons were more widely read than those of any man in any age. He was a prolific writer, a philanthropist, a "preacher-maker." He was brought up amid extreme Calvinistic teachings and beliefs, but ultimately freed himself from the gloomy religiousness of his boyhood, though it must ever remain true, as Mr. Hunter said, "that Spurgeon was an old Puritan, bound in morocco." His public teachings read as if delivered by an Arminian, and he had a fund of humor that he was not afraid to utilize in the pulpit and out. He was a man pre-eminently better than his creed. Hence the marvellous hold he had on the masses for many years.

Some of the stories that have gained currency never had any foundation in fact. He was fond of a good story, he used homely illustrations in the pulpit, he believed in the anecdotal style of preaching, but he did not slide down the pulpit banister, merely to show a sinner how a man falls from grace, or backslides,—for at that time he had no rails to his pulpit. Speaking of Spurgeon's practical sermonizing, which, to the uninitiated, seemed very much like the presentation of "a free gospel," it may be but just to state that Mr. Spurgeon could, at times, let the world know just where he stood theologically, whether in reference to "the down-grade" tendency in theology, or Calvinism pure and simple. It may not be generally known that he and Mr. Beecher had a theological tilt, which happened in this way. Beecher had attacked Calvinism, affirming that Calvinistic doctrine was, in these days, as useless as the ugly hump on the camel's back. This statement was answered by the preacher of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, who shrewdly said that "the hump on the camel's back, so far from being useless, is absolutely necessary, because it furnishes its owner, as from a storehouse, with nourishment and strength in its long journeys through the desert." Spurgeon thus turned the tables against his adversary, and from his standpoint proved that the Brooklyn divine "had erred," the London preacher being well assured that Calvinism is the strength of Christian doctrine and life.

Spurgeon's humor was of the quiet style, often taking to itself a practical sort of demonstration. He used to say that the next best thing to the grace of God (for a minister) was *oxygen*, and the following amusing illustration will show that his works were according to his faith.

Before the great tabernacle had been built, and while Spurgeon was pastor of New Park Street Chapel, he suggested that some iron bars be removed from the windows, in order that the chapel might be the better ventilated. This was objected to by certain old fashioned deacons, and so the bad air was hashed up to the pious worshippers week by week. One Sunday morning, however, the aforesaid brethren found that *somebody* had broken the windows, and the pastor's attention was drawn to the work of the miscreants who had dared to do this thing. Mr. Spurgeon offered forthwith to reward any "person or persons" who should give information regarding the offenders. The fact however was (though the officials did not find it out,) that it was he himself who had poked his cane through the windows which then admitted freely that oxygen of which he stood in need.

It is related of Mr. Spurgeon that once he indulged in "levity" when most family men might have reasonably been expected to indulge in sombre thought, namely when the nurse came to inform him that Mrs. Spurgeon had given birth to twins. Looking quietly at her, he remarked in

language poetic and even religious:

“Not more than others I deserve;
But God has given me more.”

Spurgeon wrote as he spoke. At the end of a brief holiday in Scotland he wrote to a gentleman who had asked him to preach:

Dear Friend: I have returned to England. I had eleven clear week days in Scotland, and was asked to preach more than *fifty times*. *That* when I came for rest—and in a Christian country, too! “A merciful man is merciful to his *beast*.” God speed you.—C. H. Spurgeon.

This playful spirit again comes to the surface in his dealings with Mr. Barnum, the enterprising American showman, who once offered Mr. Spurgeon a large sum of money to lecture in the States. This offer he declined by simply referring Mr. Barnum “to Acts 13 and 10,” where it is written: “O full of all subtilty, and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not to cease to pervert the right way of the Lord?”

During Dr. Wayland’s visit to Spurgeon’s Orphanages in 1886 the founder was described as “happy and full of sportiveness,” and asked the girls class a question in arithmetic: “Now suppose I should cut Dr. Wayland in two, right down lengthwise, what would that be like in arithmetic?” The doctor was very tall, and, as there was no reply, Mr. Spurgeon answered his own ques-

tion, and told them the answer was *long division*. Then he continued: "Suppose I should cut him up into little bits, what would that be? Would it not be fractions?"

Speaking of the famous Dr. Guthrie, Spurgeon gives us a glimpse of himself and his love of wit and humor saying: "What a man he was to be with! And he could tell a story too. When we were together *we were happy*."

Spurgeon was much in the public eye, and one of his delights, as Dr. Cuyler of Brooklyn says, was to show his friends from across these a portfolio in which he had carefully preserved all the caricatures of himself as set forth by the comic press.

While traveling in Scotland he was entertained at a public dinner in the city of Glasgow. His host, who was a prominent official, was asked in the course of conversation "whether he was aware that in virtue of his office he was entitled to travel through turnpike toll-gates *without charge*?" On the gentleman expressing surprise at this, Mr Spurgeon slyly said: "Yes, *you* can walk through free, but your horse must pay."

Mr. Spurgeon was a joker, but he was also a tremendous worker and sustained his reputation for many years. I recall his good natured face as I saw him in my youth in the Tabernacle pulpit. He made use of every power he possessed, and if success was ever attained by a minister, surely he won it. The mere summary of his

achievements (outside of his vast literary labors) is amazing. He built the great Metropolitan Tabernacle, which I have seen filled with nearly 6000 people on a Sunday morning. He received into the fellowship of his church over 5000 members. He sustained 23 mission stations, and controlled 27 Sunday Schools with 500 teachers and 8000 scholars. Besides all this pastoral and mission work he built and sustained the Pastors' College, and the Orphans' Asylum already referred to, together with another lovely charity known as the Old Ladies' Home.

We cannot do better, in conclusion, than quote from Mr. Spurgeon's address to his students in the Pastors' College. He was urging them to be confident in spirit and said: "We are not going to show the white feather, not even to tolerate a trembling thought. Years ago they charged me with being too flippant and jocose, but of late the charge has shifted and I am reviled as despondent, bilious, and nervous. I conceive that my innocence is clear. *I protest that I am quite as merry as may be fit.*" (*)

We take leave of the great pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle by showing how his ready wit aided him in getting rid of one of the Lord's

(*) Spurgeon upheld the wisdom of using homely illustrations, even the homeliest. Only he insisted upon the stories employed being fresh, not stale. "That illustration," he says, "about the ship being lost, and one of the crew being saved by a life-boat and whispering, 'There's another man, there's another man!' What good can be done by so worn-out an illustration—except to give some old maids fresh hope?"

silly people. The servant had been instructed not to disturb Mr. Spurgeon, it being Saturday, but a man who said he was "a servant of the Lord" urged the domestic to take the message to the pastor. She reluctantly complied, and when the preacher heard the "Lord's servant" by proxy he got rid of him by sending word that he was engaged with the man's *Master* and could not be disturbed.

Chapter XI.

The Wit of Some Popular Preachers.

(Continued.)

"To some natures any evidence of humor in the pulpit is objectionable. Such a view is contracted. Humor is as true and serviceable a human quality as pathos; and to evoke a smile, either in church or elsewhere, is quite as virtuous as to educe a tear. Perhaps the burden of this unintelligible world would grow more comprehensible if we made allowance for such a quality in the Divine Being."—*Rev. Joseph Dawson.*

ANOTHER eloquent and popular preacher who enjoyed celebrity in his day was Robert Hall, who was born in the year 1764. In spite of constant physical pain, that accompanied him through life, he was noted for playfulness and wit. He indulged somewhat in good natured raillery, but always managed to avoid giving offence. Here is an example of his method in checking inordinate vanity. A preacher of Mr. Hall's denomination (Baptist) having delivered a sermon in the hearing of Mr. Hall,

pressed him with disgusting self-complacency and indelicacy to state what he thought of the sermon. Mr. Hall remained silent for some time, hoping that the silent snub would answer the purpose. But all in vain; this only incited the conceited preacher to greater earnestness. At length he said: "There was one very fine passage, Sir." "I am rejoiced to hear you say so. Pray, Mr. Hall, which was it?" "Why, Sir, *it was the passage from the pulpit to the vestry.*" *Exit crestfallen preacher, whom we may thank for giving us such a classic gem of ironical wit.*

Unfortunately Mr. Hall suffered at one time from brain affection, and had to be placed in a lunatic asylum. It was here that a certain member of his flock visited him, and being of a melancholy disposition, began to bemoan the fate of his pastor, and said: "What brought you to this state, Mr. Hall?" For a moment the torch of reason asserted itself and flashed forth, and Mr. Hall promptly replied, touching his forehead significantly: "What will never bring you here, Sir; *too much brain, Sir; too much brain.*"

Discountenancing empty compliments he said on one occasion: "In compliments 2 and 2 do not make 4, and 20 and 20 fall very far short of 40. Deal not, then, in that *deceitful arithmetic.*"

Speaking of a lady who had used too familiar language in speaking of the Supreme Being, Mr. Hall said: "It is a great mistake to affect this kind of familiarity with the King of kings, and

“speak of Him as if He were a *neat door neighbour* from a pretence of love.” That witty sentence should be marked, learned, and inwardly digested by all who “take the name of God in vain” in over-familiarity, whether in public or private converse.

A friend of Mr. Hall’s (Dr. Parr) was a great smoker, and on some one entering the study of the latter he expressed surprise at seeing Mr. Hall indulging in the weed. “Oh!—Sir,” said he, “I am only qualifying myself for the society of a Doctor of Divinity; and this (holding up the pipe) is my test of admission.”

Dr. Adam Clarke’s pamphlet on “The Use and Abuse of Tobacco” was lent to Mr. Hall, and in the course of a few days he returned it with the remark: “Thank you, Sir, for Adam Clarke’s pamphlet. I can’t refute his arguments, and I can’t give up tobacco.”

In treating, however briefly, of popular preachers who were really witty, it would be impossible to omit the name of that remarkable and eccentric genius, the Rev. Rowland Hill. He was the sixth son of Sir Rowland Hill of Hawkstone, where “our witty priest” was born August 23rd in the year 1745. Rowland’s brother John succeeded to the title and estate. During his boyhood Rowland was noted for his flow of spirits, and once being brought into the room of his father, the baronet, and his company, was asked: “Well, Rowley, and what should you like to be?”

Looking archly towards his father, who was taking his ease in a large arm chair, the young rogue said: "I should like to be a *baronet*, and sit in a great chair." This answer was not prophetic of his life-work, as his brother got the "arm chair" the ease and the title—while Rowland got the hard toil of a Church clergyman, who was withal an itinerant preacher. He took the degree of B. A. at Cambridge in 1769, but on account of his unusual conduct in preaching out of doors was compelled to leave the University. Though brought up in the Churchmanship of those days, he was an enthusiastic believer in the methods of Wesley and Whitefield, preaching anywhere and everywhere. Hill was a well known athlete, and distinguished himself not a little while at College. He was no gloomy, sad eyed recluse, or ascetic, and while never guilty of "irregularities" of the stereotyped sort so common in those days—he *was* guilty of "irregularities" of quite another sort—he was "too pious," too earnest, too determined to spend and be spent for Christ and human souls,—in a word he had too much zeal for God; so, unfortunately he was refused ordination on the ground that he would not promise to conform to "the usual order of things." Like the other earnest souls of his day in like conditions, he was persecuted for righteousness' sake. In those days it was "orthodox" so to do. However, on Trinity Sunday 1773 Rowland Hill was ordained by the Bishop of Bath and Wells. Hill's career

was remarkable in several respects. He ever professed attachment to the Church of England of which he was a clergyman, he loved the liturgy and stood by the Articles, and yet he remained a "free lance"—preaching all over the country; and at length drawing around his London "field pulpit" an immense following, that eventually put up for him the well known Surrey Chapel, he filled it for years with thousands of eager listeners. The Society he formed in connection with Surrey Chapel, though not subject to any Bishop, had, as its standard of doctrine, the Articles of the Church of England, and the public worship was that of the Book of Common Prayer; yet withal there was much flexibility in certain other respects.

Like many popular and witty preachers a great many stories were circulated concerning him, some of which certainly had no foundation in fact. At the same time he was a most witty and eccentric man, in private life, and in the pulpit, but his pulpit eccentricity was natural to him, and was not exploited for notoriety's sake.

He grew to be such a "character" that if he by chance stood still on a London street, people could be heard saying to each other "That's Rowland Hill!" His preaching, although often enlivened with funny things, was fervent, realistic, and overwhelmingly persuasive. The Dean of Carlisle, himself a man of mark, was so worked upon by one of his earnest appeals that he said: "Mr.

Hill, Mr. Hill, I felt to-day 'tis this slap-dash preaching, say what they will, that does the good."

Happily some good stories of Rowland *are* authenticated, although almost buried amid the debris,—the literary debris of the century. On one occasion Rowland's ready wit was of considerable service to himself and others, for by it he managed to free himself of highwaymen. He was riding in a phaeton somewhere near London, accompanied by Mrs. Hill, and before him on the road were his assistants who had literally fallen among thieves, who later tried it upon Mr. Hill demanding according the knightly language of the road "his money or his life." Instead of meekly yielding to the miscreants, Hill set up the most awful and bloodcurdling yells—yells so utterly demoralizing that the fellows were literally startled and alarmed and one of them—a superstitious fellow evidently,—ran off crying: "We have stopped the Devil by mistake, and had better be off." In telling the joke later on, Mr. Hill said: "I stood up in the carriage, and made all the outrageous noises I could think of, which frightened the men out of their wits."

In the pulpit Mr. Hill often blended humor with his teaching. He used to say: "The queer thought came into my head and out it came, and I could not help it, I wish it had kept in though."

He left us a singularly fine and sincerely religious sentiment as regards what the aim and object of the "pure" wit should be when he said

with great solemnity: "I never wish to say a single word to excite a smile, which would prevent an immediate approach to God, in all the solemnity of spiritual prayer." Hill was an observer of the different modes of preaching, and drew up, in his own peculiar style, a string of characteristics of the various kinds of pulpit orators. Here are a few of them:

Powerful. The man who preaches, from the bottom of his heart, the truths of the gospel with energy, to the consciences of his hearers.

Sober. The man who lulls you fast to sleep.

Stiff. One who pins himself down to think and speak by rule.

Rash. A preacher who says what comes uppermost without any consideration.

Conceited. Vainly aims at every thing—and says—nothing.

Welsh manner. A man that bawls out very good things, till he can bawl no longer.

Methodist. Splits the heads of his sermons into so many parts, that he almost splits the heads of his hearers.

Affectionate. The happy man who feels for souls tenderly, preaches Christ affectionately, and yearns over souls in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

Dogmatic. A man who goes by his own brains, right or wrong.

Peevish. One who picks into every body's thoughts, and thinks no one right but himself.

Fanciful. One who, instead of being led by

wisdom, runs after a thousand visionary whimsies and conceits.

Self-important. Thinks nobody like himself.

Noisy. A loud roar, and nothing in it.

Genteel. The vain fool that is fond of dressing up words without meaning.

He once said of a man who knew the truth, but seemed afraid to preach it in its fullness: "He preaches the gospel as a donkey mumbles a thistle, *very cautiously*." He could not endure any thing like vanity in a minister. A *very fine* Dissenter, with a doctor's degree fresh from the north, once paid him a visit; he fidgeted about all the time he was talking. When he left the room, Mr. Hill lifted up his eyes and said in his most comic tone of voice: "Only think that a D. D. degree should ever be converted into a pedestal for a puppy!"

Preaching to rustics, far from the great centres, he sometimes had to simplify his talk to reach his hearers. This possibly led some to assert that he descended to the ludicrous. Speaking to some country people he said: "I want you to have a holy aversion to sin. Do you know what I mean by aversion? Suppose any of you were to put your hand into your pocket and feel *a toad there*; you would draw it out instantly from *an aversion* to the animal. Now my desire is that when conscious of the presence of sin, you should have just such an aversion as that to it."

In his appeals for contributions for religious

work, he sometimes said some queer things. "There is," he exclaimed on one of the occasions, perpetual frost in the pockets of some wealthy people; as soon as they put their hands into them they are frozen and unable to draw out the purse. Had I my way, I would *hang* all misers, but in the reverse of the common mode. I would hang them up by the heels, that their money might run out of their pockets, and make a famous scramble for you to pick up and put in the collection."

He had some experience with the "tramp." Passing from the house one day he was cordially greeted by one of these gentry, who said he was glad to see the minister. Putting on a look of surprise Mr. Hill said: "What! ar'n't you *hanged* yet?" and passed back into the house.

Mr. Hill had very little patience with the *un-co guid*,—the people who think their piety is best seen in gloom and solemnity. Speaking of such people and recommending cheerfulness of disposition, he said: "Some folks appear as if they had been bathed in crab verjuice in their infancy which penetrated through their skins, and has made them sour-blooded ever since, but this will not do for a messenger of the gospel—he must manifest a spirit of love."

A minister who was known to preach very "dry" sermons, and was himself conscious of the defect, said to Mr. Hill that while his sermons *were* dry—they might be useful, for Scripture showed that Samson had slain the Philistines

with the jawbone of an ass. "True he did" said Mr. Hill "*but it was a moist jawbone.*"

To an Antinomian who excused himself for the drink habit, by saying: "Do you think that a glass of liquor will drive grace out of my soul?" he replied "*no*, for there is none in it."

Examples of the wit of many other popular preachers might be given, but it will suffice to "sample" a few who, in various ways and places, have won the right to be called not only popular preachers, but witty prelates and divines. Dean Church was blessed with a keen and discriminating sense of humor. The late Archbishop Magee was a lover of the joke and the story. The great Bishop Wilberforce won great distinction as a witty prelate. Dean Purey-Cust in his lecture on the "Bishop Wilberforce" tells the following story. The bishop was speaking of the nobility of true work and said: "Though I am addressing an audience of working men, I may claim to be a working man myself, for I work as hard as any man here present." A voice from the audience called out: "But how about the pay?" (The income of Winchester is about \$32,000 per annum.) A burst of laughter followed this sally, which was with difficulty hushed by those who feared that the bishop might be offended, but not a cloud passed over his countenance, as with twinkling eye he joined in the general merriment. and then, silence being restored, he said without a moment's hesitation and with the smile still playing

upon his face: "My friend asks, how about the pay? I will tell him at once. You see, *I am paid the same whether I work or whether I don't.*" The audience of working men saw the point—namely, his work was being *done for its own sake*, and they applauded him to the echo.

Bishop Wilberforce, when in the Oxford see, had lost a clergyman whom he wished to retain in his diocese. A good living had drawn him away. The Bishop had said in vain: "Don't leave civilization as we have it, for barbarism as they have it in Surrey." After the Bishop had accepted the Winchester see, he met this same clergyman at a certain nobleman's dinner table in the afore-said county of *Surrey*, and the host teased the Bishop about his former remark, and finally asked his lordship if he still considered Surrey a barbarous place. To this raillery the Bishop replied: "Yes,—and the barbarous people showed us no little kindness." (Acts 28: 2.)

Lord Palmerston once advised Bishop Wilberforce to take a carriage to the Abbey near the nobleman's seat, whither the bishop desired to go, but the latter thinking it would not rain as predicted decided to walk, whereupon the premier said at dinner, the Bishop having got wet after all,

How blest is he who ne'er consents
By ill *advice to walk*,

applying Tate and Brady in a practical way, even to a Bishop. But the prelate was quite ready for

the criticism and retorted,

Nor stands *in sinners' ways*, nor sits
Where men profanely talk.

The Bishop did not raise a smile in the pulpit, and this doubtless accounts for the saying regarding him that there were "two Bishops of Oxford,"—the jubilant and the severe. His wonderful sermons often moved his hearers to tears, and many felt like Bishop Blomfield who once said to the great Bishop: "I do like to hear you, and yet you make me weep." At church the Bishop would not make them laugh, but he did not shrink from doing it at church gatherings in unconsecrated halls, as the following anecdote shows.

At a meeting in Exeter Hall in London, Bishop Wilberforce spoke eloquently, and at the close of his address the people began to leave. A gentleman who, according to the programme, was to speak, said to the bishop: "I need not speak. I hardly think they expect me." "To be sure they do," retorted the prelate; "don't you see they are all going out?"

Bishop Phillips Brooks had a sense of humor, but we find no trace of wit in his pulpit utterances. I heard him at the Louisville Church Congress, where he made an impassioned address on the proposed "change of name" of the Episcopal Church. He ridiculed the tendency to look England-wards, or to make extravagant claims for that branch of the church and bade

the promoters of "the change of name" to make the Americans theirs by apostolic zeal, and derided the pretention that would arrogantly assert itself as "The American Church" when it was still so relatively small. In a burst of fervent and fluent eloquence he coined a phrase which I do not recall as having been noticed elsewhere. He said that to call *ourselves* the "American Church" under present conditions was "impotent impudence." It is said that the Bishop allowed his sense of humor to have play for a moment when describing his "first sermon" which was on "The simplicity that is in Christ." Laughing about its defects once he mentions as being the description of a friend and withal a true one that "there was very much *simplicity* in it—and no Christ."

It seems that even *archbishops* have this sense of humor, and, best of all, they, like some other clerical jokers, in stall and on throne, can laugh and enjoy a joke—like other good fellows. This is a relief, provided the laugh be always at the expense of some other party. The late Archbishop Tait was returning from the city and was passing in his carriage down Holloway Hill when he observed "a runaway" making straight for his carriage and himself. There was not much time for planning an escape from the great dray, so the Archbishop reached forward, and as the animal dashed towards them he threw his manuscript-sermon at his eyes. It was a fine check, and the Archbishop was saved from broken

bones. Afterwards he humorously described the scene, and said: "I don't know whether my sermon did any good to the congregation that morning, but it had been of considerable service to *myself*."

Wit and humor would not be looked for ordinarily in the Evangelist, or "Revivalist," and yet Moody on this side the Atlantic, and such a man as the late Peter Mackenzie in England, were each, in their way, facetious and witty. What Canon Liddon with his spirituality, learning, and elegance of diction was to Anglicans, who attended St. Paul's Cathedral, or what Charles H. Spurgeon was to the Baptists everywhere, that was Peter Mackenzie to English Wesleyans. Who that ever heard, or saw him, can ever forget his rugged face and witty yet homely eloquence, delivered with the north country twang? He rose from being a poor uneducated miner to become one of the best known popular lecturers and preachers in British Methodism. He was a queer genius, and I shall never forget either the impressions of his wit, his gestures, or his grimaces. He always clung to his own quaint and unconventional style, and laughed off the critics, whether theological Professors or otherwise, who would have *reformed* him. He had a peculiar method of dealing with Bible characters upon which he lectured all over the country for many years. I remember seeing a congregation, or audience at Lynn, in England, utterly carried

away by laughter as he described an "Esther" a "Solomon" or an "Elijah."

Dr. Hannah once tried to induce "Peter," as he was called, to ornament his public utterances a little, to "clothe his ideas (which were good) in more graceful language"—but all was thrown away on Mackenzie who answered: "Hoots, doctor, they, the ideas, come so fast I have only time to *slip their shirts on*, and off they must run."

While the guest of a lady in Wales, who asked him if he felt refreshed after his slumbers, he said: "So much so, ma'am, that you must send in your claim to the Wesleyan Conference *for repairing Peter*." On April 14th '88, Mr. Mackenzie preached and lectured at Wardle near Rochdale. On the following morning he was being driven back to Rochdale by his host, whose horse, a spirited and fast trotter, was "making time" at an almost dangerous pace, whereupon Peter, placing his hand on the driver's arm, said: "A little slower, if you please. We don't want the gospel *spreading* this morning."

One day at the tea table of his host he expressed his appreciation of "the cup that cheers" something after this fashion: "Ah! this is something like tea. I get tea sometimes so weak, that it can scarcely waddle out of the pot."

While some extremely straight-laced Methodists spoke of "Peter" as though he were something of a religious mountebank, the fact remains that he not only drew the poor and the artizan

class, but he was appreciated by the middle class, and sect or creed did not prevent all sorts and conditions of men from listening and yielding to the spell of his humorous and pathetic preaching of the evangelical doctrines.

Preaching on the three Hebrew children, and of Nebuchadnezzar's command to "come forth" from the fiery furnace, he asked in a humorous tone: "What would the King have looked like, if they had said with Paul 'Come and fetch us'?"

On another subject, namely the Canaanitish woman, he said: "She begged for *a crumb*, and Christ handed her the *whole* loaf, and bade her *cut for herself*."

Peter Mackenzie was an intensely realistic, and dramatic lecturer and preacher; what he saw in imagination he made others see. Lecturing on "Queen Esther," and describing how some one was wishing to see the king, he suddenly exclaimed: "Just see who that is at the door," and *two officials rose immediately to see who was waiting outside*. Rebuking selfish Christians he said: "There are some people so selfish that they would monopolize God if they could, and gather up all His light. But look at the matter fairly, and see what a blunder they make. What would happen if a man could monopolize the sun? Try it! Try and focus all the sun's rays upon your little self. Do you feel warm and comfortable? Why, man, it would melt you! There would be nothing left of you, but *a grease spot*."

Some of Peter Mackenzie's "brevities" were startlingly original and unconventional. He puffed away the "halo" around Scripture characters and "modernized" them with a vengeance. Lecturing on Jonah he brought him to the place where he was overboard, and then made the great fish say to the prophet: "Come in Jonah—*out of the wet.*"

He used to introduce his lecture on "The Tongue" by saying dryly "The subject is in *everybody's mouth*—more's the pity if it is'nt." The labors of this man were incessant. He traveled everywhere, and not long before his death had 600 engagements in advance. It is safe to say that he lectured and preached eleven or twelve times every week for years, and when people asked him how long he expected to keep that kind of thing up he replied "till I drop," or in a humorous way, as on the occasion of a friend inviting him "to rest a few days" he remarked that there could be no rest for him "till he was dressed in a wooden suit, and tucked in with a shovel." Like the great wit, Sydney Smith, he kept up his spirits till the last, and though suddenly called to lay his armor down, to "drop" his working tools, he was "funny" until he was called to exchange the joyous things of earth, which he had fairly reveled in, for "the joys beyond." This I think was in 1895.

In the above examples, taken from such widely different spheres, we see that touch of na-

ture which makes the whole world kin. While utterly unlike in many particulars, the popular preachers alluded to, whether aiming to enliven a small social, or a brilliant assembly, whether consciously or unconsciously employing humor in their public discourse, were masters of men's emotions, and could touch the fountain of tears or unlock the hidden treasure of wit that lies concealed in almost every human soul. The cultured scholar, and the rough miner met on the broad platform of good fellowship, and thus we leave them.

Chapter XII.

The Humor of the Negro Preacher.

"The ludicrous has its place in the universe; it is not a human invention, but one of the divine ideas, illustrated in the practical jokes of kittens and monkeys, long before Aristophanes or Shakespeare."—*Holmes*.

SERHAPS this is why the typical features of a good natured negro with his broad grin, bright "ivories" and speaking eyes, is a sort of perpetual practical joke to many of the "white folks."

That the American negro, who has suffered so much wrong and injustice, should still be proverbially good natured and "jolly," able to laugh—and grow fat, is one of the most remarkable things of our times when we recall all "our brother in black" has endured, both before and since his emancipation, when we take account all of the terrible hardships and difficulties he has encountered in civilizing himself, when we recall his abject condition after the war, "stripped of all his possessions, unfurnished with intelligence, unlearned in the school of self sacrifice and moral

restraint, with no way out of the wilderness" and no Moses to lead him to "the promised land" of civilization. It would not have surprised us if he had lost heart,—allowed the waves of despair to settle over him, and in the face of the tremendous problem of life, given up the contest broken-hearted. But no such actuality occurred. On the contrary we find the negro race hopefully and cheerfully readjusting themselves to the great work of *meriting* their citizenship, promoting education, giving themselves to the task of improving their social and industrial condition. (*) Since the American-Spanish war the President of the United States gave an address to the colored students of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, Alabama, in the following strain:

"What steady and gratifying advances have been made here during the past fifteen years a personal inspection of the material equipment strikingly proves. The fundamental plan of the original undertaking has been steadily followed; but new features have been added; gaps in the course of instruction have been filled in; the patronage and resources have been largely increased until even the legislative department of the State of Alabama recognized the worth of the work and of the great opportunities here afford-

(*) The negro in the United States is no longer a pauper, for according to the best authorities he pays taxes on property amounting to three hundred million dollars. He also possesses denominational church property amounting to \$26,626,448.

ed. From one small frame house the institution has grown until it includes the fine group of dormitories, recitation rooms, lecture halls, and work shops which have so surprised and delighted us today. A thousand students, I am told, are here cared for by nearly a hundred teachers, altogether forming with the preparatory department a symmetrical scholastic community which has been well called a model for the industrial colored schools of the South. Certain it is that a pupil bent on fitting himself or herself for mechanical work can have the widest choice of useful and domestic occupations."

The above institution was founded by, and is today managed by, a negro of special fitness and education, and this is but a sign of the many uplifting and regenerating forces that make for the betterment of the colored race. The American people have done much for the black man, but the white man owes him "more than clothes and fire" for, as the philosopher says, we owe to man, man, and this leads us to say that while the colored preacher makes quite "a figure" from the standpoint of the humorist, there are some things that call, not for smiles—but for tears.

The colored race in the South needs "better preachers," not funnier "talkers," but men of moral and mental force who will teach *religion*, not religious emotionalism, men who will "lead" their flocks into evangelical truth, not into sectarian hair-splitting, or a false theology. We are

amused, and have been for many years, at the "Nigger preacher" story, oftentimes manifesting ignorance, irreverence, and the desire to stand well with the "brederen"—by keeping quiet about the moral law, and here it may be added, we do not give the following samples of negro humor in derision, but simply to illustrate our theme of negro humor. A good deal of such humor is unconscious, and appeals to us from its ludicrous features—its quaint dialect, and that peculiar "something" that baffles description. I shall never forget some services "of the colored folks" that I have attended, nor the special hymns the people sang for my hostess and myself. Who could help laughing even at the ignorance and twaddle of the following *hymn* which I heard sung beautifully at a colored Methodist Church in Indiana. The minister to do honor to the lady who accompanied me (whose father often helped them financially) sang a line in solo fashion and the congregation took up each line right lustily, and many with a good courage. Here is the gem, which from that day to this, I could never find yielding a single sentiment of praise, prayer, or adoration to the Deity, *but the melody was pretty.*

Preacher.—"There's a little wheel rolling in my heart."—
Chorus.—"In my heart, In my heart. In my heart, In my heart.

There's a little wheel rolling in my heart."

Considering the few advantages, educational and otherwise, that the colored preacher possess-

es, the wonder is that he does so well. Frequently he cannot even read the Bible, and as Mrs. Waterbury shows in her little book of "Experiences," as an educator among the Freedmen, the preacher has to find someone to read and explain the passage of Scripture that he desires to hold forth upon at "the next meetin.'" The homiletic "extracts" here given can, I think, be relied upon, as illustrations of the negro preacher's style, especially when he is original,—and uneducated.

The following "deliverance" is vouched for by the lady above referred to, who, soon after the Civil War went "down South" at the risk of her life to teach in one of the first "Freedmen's Schools" on a plantation twenty-five miles from a railway. The first illustration we will call:

The "Rev." State Senator, and Some of His "Idees."

The Rev. I. A——was not only "a preacher" but a colored representative in the State Legislature. After the arrival of the white "pussons" he spent his time between the sittings of the legislature, and the "sittings" of the negro school. He could read a little, and managed to get through his texts and his hymn-book, and he had natural ability, was thirsting for knowledge, —but loved hard words, and almost "used up the dictionary," in his vocabulary. This passion for unusually difficult words has often given us much enjoyment. The colored people revel in a high sounding phrase—it matters little whether they,

or their auditors, understand the same. It's all the same to "Sambo." Speaking of the then existing condition of his race the Rev. I. A——said: "Ye see, ma'am, our race has to creep afore we can walk, and it takes *a mighty sight of speculation to raise the ideas of our minds to the citizenship of the comprehension of the situation of ignorance.* A little learning makes us hanker after the dish."

"Now, ma'am, these white people wants you away from here. They's more afraid o' you five or six wimmen than a whole company o' soldiers. They 'spects you'll teach these risin' generation to vote, an' to rise above themselves."

We inform the senator that their fears are groundless; that we differ with President Lincoln about voting; we think no man, North or South, should be allowed to vote, who cannot read his ballot.

"Oh! ah! yes'm; but the understanding of the comprehension of our relation to the necessary conditions of the freedom of a government, don't make no sort o' difference with the compulsion of the former conditions of servitude to the present ideas of the citizens of this republic, ma'am."

"Ye see, ma'am, I wants to learn 'rithmetic. I aint gwine to steal or murder, and I'm a citizen of this republic gettin' knowledge under difficulties. I'm a blacksmith by trade, an' I aint a car-in' ef I don't have only *half* enough to eat, ef I can learn 'rithmetic. The Lord willin', I'll preach the Sunday follerin', an' will you jest 'splain de

text? It's in Genesis ii: 7. 'And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.' "

"They tell me names has a meanin'; what's the meanin' of 'Adam,' ma'ε m? The dictionary says 'earth-man; red earth.' Does you s'pose Adam was a red man? So it says; read it for yourself. Yes'm; well, then, ef all sprung from Adam, an' he was a red man, what's all this fuss about color fur, among the white 'uns? Don' they know they's got ancestry's wa'n't so white as some on'em? Tell ye what, dere is some good Southern folks, an' dere is dem as wants de Lord Almighty tu ax dere pardon fur makin' us black uns, an' tu step down an' let dem rule; an' I's 'feared dey'll fetch up where 'taint altogether a 'white man's government,' 'cause dere idees is 'noxious tu de Lord, an' de heft o' de angels."

"Now, ma'am, is dere any government as is gwine tu help dis union have deyselves, an' let us have de chance to breathe God's air, an' not ax dere pardon fur it? Whar's it dey used tu run tu a follerin' de Norf star, an' find pertection?"

"England, in the queen's dominion; to Canada."

"Yes'm; is that North o' Mason and Dixon's line? Whar duz the queen hold her state, an' who is she?"

"The queen is a woman, governor of England and Canada, and much more. She has freed the

last slave in her dominions, not many years ago. An African prince has lately been brought over to see her, and when he saw her in the midst of her happy subjects, he asked her the cause of all her peace, and she brought out a Bible and gave him, and told him that book contained it all. It is the boast of England that

“ ‘Slaves cannot live in England,
They touch her shores, and their shackles fall.’ ”

“ ‘Stonishin,’ ma’am ! Was she related to the Queen o’ Sheba, as de good book tells about ? When you go North, er you meet up with her, give her my best respects, ma’am.” *Exit* state senator; school bell rings.

An old Mississippi Preacher on “Thanksgiving Day.”

He was a grey-haired Negro stolen from Africa, and made a slave under the Stars and Stripes. He has given out the “hymn”

I’m going down Jordan,
Going down Jordan,
Going down Jordan,
To never return again.

Whether that was the most “fitting” ditty to make the congregation “thankful” might be open to doubt, but the people were not over-particular, so in due time he proceeded to deliver his sermon from which we take the following extract:

“Friends and fellow sinners! The powers

that be has invited us to jine in thanksgivin' an' we is mighty glad to be able to respond. For ef dere is a people which has a right to be thankful, it is we poor, low down 'uns, which aint neber had noffin in dis world. Bein' poor down here in dese low grounds ob sorrow don't cut me out *ob a house and lot in heaben*; an' my house thar is made ob all manner ob jewelry dat heaben can afford. De blessed Master, he was poor, too, though he took his hand *an' throwed out de curtain ob de universe*; he didn't hab whar to lay his head. Let's all pack up an' go to glory!

"Bredren, I aint much time to tarry here. It's a runnin' for de prize! When we git to dat heavenly atmosphere, we'll sing de doxology for eber. Now, letebery one of you all stop stealin', an' live as dis free people ought to. How hard some of you work to get land, an' property. *Let me offer you a piece ob land in glory!* Is it a healthy country? Yes; nobody ever dies thar. Bime-by, de great Master'll say, 'Gabriel! blow shrill and easy, an' wake up all my people fust.' Den he'll say, 'Michael! tell my people to step out on de right hand.' Den you'll know which side you is on; an' ef you is on de right hand side, you'll play de golden harp ob de New Jerusalem for eber.

"Bredren, less be thankful for what we has, an' more 'specially for our freedom, an' live with 'spectations ob de glorious home; an' let's tote our burdens here a little longer, an' bime-by we'll set down wid Paul, for he went to glory in de chariot

ob salvation, de fore wheels a rollin' in de grace
ob God, an' de hind wheels a rollin' in love.

"De audience please rise, an' sing, an' take de
partin' hand, an' be dismissed.

"Bredren, de text is 'Be thankful.' Set your
minds on it, an' remember dis is an *inquisition into*
citizenship!

"De audience rise, an' sing, an' be dismissed:

" 'Roll, Jorden roll; roll, Jorden, roll.
You'd better be sittin' in de kingdom,
To hear ole Jorden roll.' "

A Colored Preacher's Sermon on the Ten Virgins.

He was a mulatto, in the vigor of life. He
read the 25th chapter of St. Matthew, the parable
of the ten virgins. As he came to the foot of the
page he observed that something was wrong, the
pages did not harmonize, one was missing; so he
coolly stopped, and gravely remarked: "Brudderin,
de res of de parable am not nyar. But I'll tell
you all de res. Dem foolish virgins got de do'
shet in dere face, and it sarved dem right."

Then he made preparations to preach on the
text, which he quoted as follows: "Dese shall go
into eberlastin' punishment, but de righteous into
life eternal."

Among other odd things he said:

"Why are so many of dese hyar seats vacant?"

"Where is the brudders and sisters who
ought to be settin' hyar? Oh, some of dem is
down on Bay Street sparkin', and some of dem is
in card houses, and some of dem is in drunken

houses, and some is sittin' at home bekase deyse too tired."

"Oh-er! brudderin, when you true believers gets up to de white frone, den people will come to you and say:

"'Gib us ob your oil, for ous lamps are gone out,' and you will say-er 'you can't come dat game on us. No-er, for de tex says: 'Dese shall go away into eberlastin' punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.'" Dere's a great many people talks 'ligion bery loud down in Bay Street in de day time, but where are dey to night?

"Why-er, deyse foolin' round, expectin' when de bridegroom comes-er to borry oil from dem dat's got more."

"But what does the Scriptor' say-er?"

"Why, it says: 'Let dem radder go to him dat sells it at de sto' and while dey is gone de do' is slammed shet, for de tex says: 'Dese shall go into eberlastin' punishment, but de righteous into life eternal.'"

The Colored Brother's Besetting Sin.

At a class meeting held among the negroes "down South," the colored pastor went among the dusky members of his flock to do a little needed catechising. He soon came to one who had a weakness for stealing poultry, doing what a good many white people do in their own way, serving God on Sunday and somebody else during the week.

Said the pastor:

"Well, brother Dick, I am glad to see you here; have'nt stole any turkeys since I saw you last, brother Dick?"

"No, no, brudder Jones, no turkeys."

"Nor any chickens, brother Dick?"

"No, no, brudder Jones, no chickens."

"Thank the Lord, brother Dick! That's doing well, my brother," said the pastor, and turned away, but brother Dick relieved his conscience by saying slyly to a fellow-member of Zion: "If he'd said *ducks* he'd had me."

A Negro Preacher in a Dilemma.

An illiterate man was he, and consequently found himself occasionally out of his depth. Holding forth one day he said: "My bredren, when de fust man, Adam, was created, he was made ob wet clay, and set up agin de palins to dry."

Taking advantage of a "privelege," one of his auditors solemnly rose to his feet in the presence of all and said: "Do you say dat Adam was made ob wet clay, and set up agin the palins to dry?"

"Yes, sar, I do."

"*Den who made de palins?*"

"Set down, sar,"—said the preacher, sternly, "sich questions as dat *would upset any system ob theology.*"

A Methodist Bishop's Story.

Bishop Ames used to tell a story of a slave preacher and his owner. It runs as follows: On

one occasion the "owner" said to his living "chattel:"

"Pompey, I hear you are a great preacher."

"Yes, massa, de Lord *do* help me powerful sometimes."

"Well, Pompey, don't you think the negroes steal little things on the plantation?"

"I'se mighty 'fraid they does, massa."

"Then, Pompey, I want you to preach a sermon to the negroes about stealing."

After a few moments of reflection Pompey said:

"You see, massa, dat would 'nt *never* do, 'cause 'twould *throw* such a col'ness over de meetin'."

A Negro Preacher's Sermon on Money.

The "Atlanta Constitution" recently gave to the world the following from a sermon on "Money." Waxing eloquent, the colored man, with an eye to his own pocket book said: "My bredren, money causes mo' trouble in dis worl dan anything I knows on. *Fac is, de devil is in de dollar!* When I see a man wid a pocket full er money, I say ter myself: Dar go a man what needs a guardeen—and I feels jes like takin' him home and lockin' up dat money fer him. Ef any ob you in de hearin' er my voice is got money on yo' pusson, bring it right heah, and lay it on de altar, en go yo ways, *en lemme pray over it* till a blessin' come ter it. Doan wait ter count it, jes come forward en unload."

In an Emergency.

A story is told of a colored preacher who was holding a meeting in a large tobacco barn in a rural district in Kentucky. An empty tobacco hogshead was impressed into service as an elevation upon which to stand while delivering his discourse. Warming up with his subject, he soon became excited. Throwing his arms in the air above his head and elevating one foot, he exclaimed: "De righteous shall rise and de wicked shall fall!" At the word "fall" he brought his foot down vehemently upon the head of the hogshead, and like a flash it gave way, and he dropped out of sight, being short in stature. Amid the precipitated uproar he reached up, grasped the chine of the barrel, and drew himself into view, shouting, "*Bless God, dey shall rise again!*"

Real Charity.

A negro preacher in Alabama was trying to teach his flock to be charitable in St Paul's sense of the word and said: "My dear bredren—de liberal man, wot gib away his property, a'nt gwan to heaben no more dan some ob you wicked sinners is. Charity a'nt no good widout righteousness; it is like beef-steak widout gravy, dat am to say, no good, nohow."

Correcting a Statement.

The "Argonaut" recently sent forth the following:

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A colored preacher, upon the occasion of delivering a forceful harangue to his congregation, said: "I see before me *twelve chicken-thieves*, including William Sanders." Now, Sandy was a handy man with a razor, and the parson's friends urged him to set things right with Sanders at the first opportunity. The parson made on the next Sunday the following announcement: "Brethren, at our last meeting I made a statement which, after mature deliberation, I desire to correct, realizing as I do that my remarks upon that occasion might not have been understood correctly. What I should have said was: 'There are in this congregation *twelve chicken-thieves*, not including William Sanders.'"

Why he Left the Church.

A negro, who as a slave had belonged to his master's church—namely the Episcopal Church, when he became "a freeman" joined the Methodists; and became a preacher among them. He explained his changed ecclesiastical relations as follows: "Ye see, Massa, in de 'Piscopal Church it takes a long time to *read de proceedins'* ob de last meetin', but in de Methodis' Church dey begins right away; dats what I like."

Interesting Letters.

Here is an extract from a short sermon delivered thirty years ago "in the woods" to a company of colored people, en route from Georgia to

Texas. The wagons being wheeled into a circle to furnish seats for the congregation, an unlearned but devout preacher takes the "preacher's stand," and, all unconsciously, produces the "funny" exegesis following. He says: "We find Paul; at first he was a persecutor, but soon's he met de Lord, an den got trowed down from the big fine horse he wuz a ridin', an' said, 'Lawd, what mus' I do?' den he turned squar' round, and we find him a writin' serious letters, *interest-in'* letters, tu de Romans, an' Hebrews, an sich. My beloved bredren, it's evidential he wuz a *different* Paul after he's converted, an' dis is a *mecorandum* for him."

The indispensable "collection" having been duly taken, he proceeds, according to custom, to take "a vote" as to the disposition of the funds, and gravely says: "Friends may signify *their elevation by rising*, and they may then retire without the least result in the world."

At the Conference.

Scene. Ante-room of a colored Annual Conference.

Time. Just before reading the appointments.

Adjournment pending. When the following conversation takes place.

Presiding Elder. "There is just one preacher more to be provided with an appointment."

Presiding "Bishop." "And who is he? The

man with the bald head near the window?"

P. E. "Yes, Bishop, and the trouble about him is, that his head *is bald on the inside*, and I don't know where to send him."

A Polite Colored Minister.

The other day, in one of the waiting rooms of the Louisville Southern depot, a very large and very black and very gorgeously dressed American lady of African antecedents entered. Every seat was occupied. In one of the seats was a well-dressed and pronouncedly pompous-looking colored gentleman—apparently a preacher, judging from his high silk hat and long black coat. He saw the swell-looking sister standing, and arising with a great air of "doing the polite," said: "Take my seat, madam; no gentleman will sit while a lady is standing." "Nevah mind, sah; nevah mind. I doesn't want to deprive you of yo' seat, sah," said the ebony queen of fashion. "You take the seat, ma'am, I gives it to you," was the response, with a great wave of the hand holding the silk hat, and a low bow. "*There's no depravity at all, ma'am, I assure you; no depravity at all.*" And she took the seat, while the parson posed for the delectation of the crowd.—*Wave.*

Too Many Societies.

An old colored preacher was asked how his church was getting on, and his answer was: "Mighty poor, mighty poor, brudder." "What

is the trouble?" and he replied: "Dem. 'cieties, 'cieties. Dey is jist drawin' all de fatness and marrow outen de body and bones ob de Blessed Lord's body. We can't do nuffin widout de 'ciety. Dar is de Lincum 'Ciety, wid Sister Jones and Brudder Brown to run it; Sister Williams mus' march in front ob de Daughters of Rebecca. Den dare is de Dorcases, de Marthas, de Daughters ob Ham, and Liberian Ladies." "Well, you have the brethren to help in the church," we suggested. "No, sah, dar am de Masons, de Odd Fellers, de Sons of Ham, and de Okalahoma Promised Land Pilgrims. Why, brudder, by de time de brudders an' sisters pays all de dues an' tends all de meetins, dere is nuffin left for Mount Pisgah church but jist de cob; de corn has been shelled off an' frowed to dese speckled chickens."

Fluctuating Church-Membership.

The following bits of humor were given me personally by a ministerial friend who is connected with a leading educational and industrial institution "down South." Some of these he obtained at first hand, so they are reliable. A colored preacher on being asked as to the numerical strength of his flock said: "That depends on de season ob de year; in de 'vival season mighty near all is members, but in de backslidin' times dar's ginerally only me, and Aunt Jane, and Ole Uncle Peter."

"New Theology."

Preaching on "Hell" a negro preacher said: "I tell you, bredren, you want to keep out of dat country. Dey has got *icicles down dar as big as saw-logs*." When questioned about such statements he justified himself as follows: "I tell ye, stranger, ye don't understan' dese people; if I should tell 'em *it's warm down der, ye could'nt keep one of dese niggers out*."

Impromptu Remarks.

An aged colored preacher, being suddenly called upon to speak at a religious gathering, excused himself from making lengthy remarks as he was totally unprepared, and was taken by surprise, but as he sat down he slyly said: "It's strange how much *game ye does see*, when ye aint got your *gun* along."

Extempore, versus Written Sermons.

Occasionally a young negro preacher writes a sermon. Visiting such an one an old colored preacher thus addressed his young brother: "Dat will nebber do. Ye see de debbel he stands right behind your desk, and he's looking over yer shoulder an seein' ebery word ye write, and when ye come inter de pulpit on Sunday *he's dar befo' ye*, and knows ebery arg'ment you're g'wyne to use, *an he can answer e'm all*. Now, my young bruder, when I gets up to preach, *de debbel himself cant' tell what i'se g'wine to say*."

"Givers,—This Sort and That."

"My dear brudders an' sisters," remarked the venerable pastor of the only colored church in town, as he carefully cleared the broad table in front of him so that every nickel, cent and button laid upon it would stand out in startling distinctness, "dere is some of de folks in dis chu'ch give accawdin' to deir means, an' some accawdin' to deir *meanness*. Le's not have any of the secon' class heah dis mawnin'!" After which the procession commenced, and everybody reached for his bottom dime.

Chapter XIII.

Gems of Clerical Wit and Wisdom.

"The rays of wit gild whereso'er they strike."—
Stillingworth.

THIS the wits "great" and "small" have realized, and the proof of it is found in the sparkling jokes and gibes left behind them. In this chapter it is our pleasant task to place under proper titles a few "good things" from many sources. The wits made daily use of their gifts, finding them helpful under the ever varying conditions of life. Wit and humor tend to evenness of temper. Here is an example of its kindly effects which we will style:

How to Keep Sweet.

The good natured and witty Bishop Hough of Winchester was once entertaining a company of gentlemen at the palace, some of whom asked to see his new weather glass, a rare and expensive instrument in those days. The Bishop of course gave the order for it to be brought in for their in-

spection, but unhappily, as the man-servant handed it to one of the guests, it somehow fell to the ground and was broken. At this disaster the guests were greatly embarrassed, and were loud in their apologies and expressions of regret, but the Bishop calmly and facetiously said: "Be under no concern, my dear sirs. I think it rather a lucky omen; hitherto we have had *a very dry season*, and now I hope we shall have some rain, for I protest *I do not remember ever to have seen the glass so low in my life.*"

Fiddle-D. D.

A good many years ago there lived in a village "among the Puritans" of New England a certain Rev. Dr. Pond, who being far ahead of his congregation in "liberality," added yet to his record this one wrong-doing that he went to New London, Connecticut, and bought for his son, who was musically inclined, *a fiddle*. One morning a prejudiced member of his flock came, like many another "good saint," to criticise the action of the parson. Seating herself, for it was of course a "she," the old maid began: "I think, Dr. Pond, that a man of your age and profession might have had something better to do, when you were in New London last week, than to buy your son Enoch a *fiddle*; all the people are ashamed that our minister should buy his son a fiddle, *a fiddle!* Oh, dear, what is the world coming to when ministers will do such things?"

"Who told you I had bought a fiddle?" inquired the D. D.

"Who told me? Why, *everybody says so*, and *some people have heard him play it as they passed your door; but aint' it true doctor?*"

"I bought Enoch a violin when I went to New London."

"A violin! what's that?"

"Did you never see one?"

"Never."

"Enoch," said the Doctor, stepping to the door of an adjacent room, "bring your violin here."

Enoch obeyed, but no sooner had he entered than the old lady said: "La! now,—there,—why, it is a fiddle."

"Do not judge rashly," said the wily doctor, "wait until you hear," (this with a wink at his son,) who caught the "cue" and at once began to play with the soberest face, the "Old Hundred." The lady seemed completely mystified. It *looked* like a fiddle, but then who ever heard of a *fiddle* discoursing anything so "sacred" as the "Old Hundred?" So, rising to depart, she said: "I am glad I came to satisfy myself. La! me, just to think *how some people will lie.*"

Use Hospitality One Toward Another.

Here is a story of Bishop Selwyn, of New Zealand. The teller of the story says that he was travelling with the Bishop to try to stop a

war between two tribes. By the last day of the march the rations had fallen to a slice of bacon and a handful of flour to be shared by three persons. In the strength of this they had to walk forty miles. When the time for eating arrived a Maori appeared, worn out and starving, having been without food two days and nights. With a light of mischief in his eyes, the Bishop said: "We must ask him *to lunch*," and he did. But the remaining twenty miles was a long drag.

What's in a Phrase?

Canon Lyttelton once told an amusing story at Glasgow, concerning Prof. Jebb. The members of the recent Educational Commission, upon which both Prof. Jebb and Canon Lyttelton served, were discussing each phrase of the report that they were going to send to Parliament, to determine whether it expressed sufficiently the exact shade of meaning the commission intended. The phrase "the teachers of England, a highly trained and intelligent set of men," was read out. Some of the members of the commission demurred to the adjectives, but the writer of the sentence spoke up for them. Prof. Jebb whispered to the Canon "*that they would apply equally well to elephants*;" after which the phrase was speedily excised.

A Practical Joke, with Practical Results.

An eccentric Methodist preacher named

Hosea Brown was "itinerating" through Michigan, and stayed one night at a hotel in Ann Arbor. He had asked the hotel clerk for a room to himself, and had been told that he could have that accommodation provided the house was not too full of guests. To make sure of comfort and privacy he retired early, and was soon fast asleep.

Toward midnight however, the inevitable "disturber" of the modern hotel appeared, and the preacher was rudely awakened, and rapidly making up his mind as to the cause of the disturbance bawled out to the landlord: "Halloo! there, —whom do you want *now*?" laying special stress on the last word.

"You must take another lodger, sir, with you" said mine host.

"What; another yet?"—

"Why, yes,—there is only one in here, is there?"

"One! why here is Mr. Brown, and a Methodist preacher, and myself already, and I should think that enough for one bed, even in Michigan."

That settled it; the landlord thought three was surely enough in *that* room, and left the witty preacher to "sweet repose."

A Ministerial "Break."

The witty Methodist mentioned above was *purposely* witty, and made practical use of his talent in that direction. Here is a brief item that

exhibits "unconscious humor" in a totally different sort of itinerant.

A good Methodist brother once startled his hearers by announcing, with regard to an approaching quarterly meeting: "The *Lord* will be with us during the morning service, and the *presiding elder* in the evening."

Reasons Against "Verting" to Rome.

In a well known controversy over certain ritualistic practices in the American Church a personal friend of mine was accused of being a priest who had leanings towards Rome, and he was asked if it was not so, and whether he did not intend ultimately to leave the Episcopal Church "and go over to Rome." To these queries he gravely replied he would, were it not for certain reasons, five in number—a *wife and four children*.

Parrying an Insult.

Wit is useful in resenting and parrying an insult. During the time John Wesley was unpopular in London, he was met on the pavement by a lewd fellow of the baser sort, who roughly declined to give the Rev. gentleman the right of way. Adding insult to injury the rough addressing Mr. Wesley said: "I never make way for a fool." Quick as thought Mr. Wesley stepped aside and with mock politeness said: "I do, Sir, pass on."

Impromptu Wit.

Ready wit sometimes saves a parson from embarrassment even in the pulpit. The most eloquent or fluent preachers have occasionally been at a loss for a thought, or a word to express the thought, sometimes being reduced to almost certain humiliation and defeat. The ready wit of an embarrassed American minister once saved him from failure. Looking down on his congregation as calmly as circumstances would permit, he admitted frankly that "he had lost the nominative of the sentence, and that things generally were mixed up," but he turned his defeat into victory, by adding "but I am bound for the kingdom anyhow."

Limitations of Papal Power.

The occupants of the papal chair have, it is said, indulged in humor. Pope Clement VII enjoyed the discomfiture of a certain Cardinal who came to His Holiness complaining that Michael Angelo had placed the well known features of the cardinal among some of the figures in hell. (The picture was that of the last Judgment.) The distressed Cardinal however got but little consolation from the pope, who said: "I have power to deliver a soul out of *purgatory*, but not out of *hell*."

A Witty Parish Priest.

The priest has some knotty questions to dis-

entangle at times. Here is the method employed by one who found a parishioner trembling at the thought of his fears. The man had seen an apparition—a ghost. Said the priest: “When and where did you see it?”

“Last night it appeared to me; as I was passing the grave yard it stood against the wall.”

“In what form did it appear?”

“It appeared in the form of an ass.”

“Go home,” said the canny priest, “Go home, and hold your tongue about it, you are doubtless a very timid man, *and have been frightened at your own shadow.*”

Clerical Criticism.

Clergymen, like other men, need plenty of the milk of human kindness, so that they may be delivered from “envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness,” and, next to the grace of God, nothing will preserve them from a censorious and hyper-critical spirit towards each other as wit and humor. If parsons *must* criticise each other’s public and private life, as it is admitted they *do*, then let it be done with sweet good nature—with a smile and a joke that will go a long way towards extracting the sting. Here is the way to do it. A certain Scottish D. D. had for his colleague a brother who was filling one of the most difficult positions,—that of a co-pastor. The latter was not famous for his eloquence. One Sunday it was the dull co-pastor’s turn to preach,

but, as he had "got wet" in a rain-storm, going to the kirk, he tried, after his arrival in the vestry-room, to persuade the other minister to mount the pulpit in his stead, promising to repay the kindness some other day. This the chief pastor however declined to do, and when pressed again by his co-worker, who urged it "because he was not dry yet," the pastor closed the argument by saying: "Gang up to the poopit, mon, ye'll be dry eneuch there."

A Story of Rev. Dr. Muhlenberg.

In this connection a good story is told of the late well known and highly esteemed founder of *St. Luke's Hospital*, New York. On one occasion the organist of the Chapel attached to the School the doctor also founded, inquired what hymns he desired to have used at the afternoon service. Having found out who was to be the preacher for the day, he summed up the good man's gifts as a preacher to boys, by selecting a hymn that would be appropriate to his style, and said: "The best selection for him will be, 'Now I lay me down to sleep.' "

Wit among the Dignitaries.

The late Archbishop of York—Dr. Magee, is credited with the following joke with a palpable "point." In a procession at some great function that included many lord-bishops and other prominent Church dignitaries, a well known ecclesiastic was observed wearing a Doctor's hood—but

not of his own University. At sight of this, one of the bishops remarked quietly to the Archbishop: "There goes a man *with a lie on his back*." To this outspoken utterance his Grace of York replied with elegant, but pungent wit: "*No; a falsehood.*"

A Matter of Conscience.

Here is an example showing how to deal with some of the weaker brethren. Dr. McLeod (father of Norman McLeod) was proceeding to open a new place of worship, and as he slowly passed through the crowd at the doors, was accosted by an elderly man with a peculiar wig,—a wig both bright and smooth, that greatly improved his appearance. Said this good man: "Doctor, if you please, I want to speak to you."

"Well, Duncan, can ye not wait until after worship?"

"No, Doctor; I *must* speak now, for *it is a matter upon my conscience.*"

"Oh! since it is a matter of conscience, tell me what it is?"

"The matter is this, Doctor; ye see the clock yonder on the front of the new church? Well, *there is no clock really there*—nothing but the face of the clock,—*there is no truth in it*, but only once in the twelve hours. Now it is, in my mind, very wrong, and quite against my conscience *that there should be a lie on the face of the Lord's house.*"

"Duncan, I will consider the point. I am

glad to see you looking so well. You are not young now. I remember you for many years, *and what a fine head of hair you have still.*"

"Eh! Doctor, you are *joking now*, it is long since I had my hair."

"Oh, Duncan, Duncan, are *you* going into the house of the Lord *with a lie upon your head?*"

It is needless to add that the people in the vicinity never heard anything further from Duncan about the "lie on the house of the Lord."

An Aid to Belief.

Some of the English Clergy do not like, nor believe in, the Athanasian Creed, and will not recite it in the service. Such an one was a Rev. Mr. Patten, who was a priest in the time of Archbishop Secker. His Grace having been informed of this, felt bound to send to admonish him no less a person than the Archdeacon, who asked his reason: "I do not believe in that form of the Creed" said the parish priest. "But your metropolitan does," responded the other ecclesiastic. "That may be true," rejoined the recusant: "and he can well afford it; he believes at the rate of seven thousand pounds a year, and I *only at fifty.*"

The Oxford Movement Defined.

Bishop Blomfield, when asked what he thought of the Catholic revival said, referring to the part played by Newman: "They may say what they like about it being founded in '*antiquity*,' but after all, every one knows, it is merely—*a*

new-mania.' "

How to Make a Sermon.

That remarkable revivalist, Thomas Binney, once gave the following hint on sermonizing. He said: "I spend the week collecting fuel, and on Sunday I set fire to it."

Getting Even.

Dr. Chalmers having sent Dr. Kidd (the author of a dull book) a copy of his once famous "Astronomical Discourses," Dr. Kidd was heard to say after skimming through them: "Something about the stars, it seems, Chalmers has been writing,—a dull, heavy book. I hope he does not expect me to read it, but I will be even with him, for I will send him a presentation copy of my 'Eternal Sonship.' "

Striking Exegesis.

Rev. Hugh Peters, a Puritan divine, was preaching on the devils entering the herd of swine, and said: "My beloved, I shall give you three observations on the text, which, for your better remembrance, I shall clothe in three English proverbs.

First, the devils went from man into swine. "They had rather play at small game than stand out."

Second. When the devils possessed them, they ran down a bank into the sea. "They must needs go whom devils drive."

Third. They were all, no less than two thousand, drowned in the sea. "The devil brought his hogs to a *fine market*."

Marital Felicity.

A dissenting minister in England, who had been married no less than three times, thus described the three ladies to whom he had been bound in the holy bonds of matrimony. The first he had married for her riches, the second on account of her beauty, the third in old age for comfort. The last had proved to be an abominable shrew; this drove him to say to a friend: "Yes, I have had the *world, the flesh, and the devil*,—but the devil sticks by."

The Bishop and his Coachman.

Dr. Marlay, Bishop of Waterford, once ordered his coachman to fetch some fresh water from the well, (the footman being absent.) To this the coachman ventured to object, saying "*his business was to drive, not to run on errands.*" "Well then," said the bishop, "bring out the coach and horses, set the pitcher inside, and drive to the well," and thus the witty Bishop gained his point, to the great amusement of the neighbors.

The Prophet's Chamber.

A Scotch preacher being sent to officiate one Sunday in a rural parish, was entertained at the Manse, and was duly shown into a very small closet-like room, certainly not the "best bed room"

reserved for visitors. On seeing it, the pastor asked the domestic whether *this* was the room intended for him. To this the maid replied, "Deed, aye, Sir, this is the prophet's chamber." "Then" said the irate preacher, "it must be for the *minor* prophets."

An Incentive to Reverence in the Choir.

Some years ago it leaked out that a President or Vice President of the United States, would, while visiting Chicago, attend a certain Episcopal Church. Just before the service the Choir-Master urged the boy-choristers to be good, and to do their best in the musical part of the service, as the "great man would be there." This was overheard by the genial Rector, whom some of us know to enjoy a joke, and we are not surprised to learn that he quietly added, as a still further reason, "that Almighty God would be there too."

On Plagiarism.

To one who had "borrowed" a sermon and delivered it without "results," a witty divine (who was the author) said: "I lent you my *fiddle*; I wish I could have lent you the *bow* I play it with."

Thomas Fuller on Plagiarism.

The quaint old divine said of his predecessor, Bishop Andrewes, "that those who were plagiarists of his sermons, could never *steal his preaching*."

A Novel Sort of "Confirmation."

Dr. Parr used rather strong language when heated in debate, or when contradicted. He once called a brother clergyman a fool, who indeed was little better. The offended priest threatened to make complaint to the Bishop of the Diocese. "Do," said the Doctor, "*and my Lord will confirm you.*"

A "Soft" Answer Turneth Away Wrath.

The publication of the second volume of the late Mr. Spurgeon's colossal "Autobiography" brings to recollection a characteristic story of the great preacher's youth. While Spurgeon was still a boy preacher, he was warned about a certain virago, and told that she intended to give him a tongue-lashing. "All right," he replied, "but that's a game at which two can play." Not long after, as he passed her gate one morning, she assailed him with a flood of billingsgate. He smiled and said: "Yes, thank you, I am quite well; I hope you are the same." Then came another burst of vituperation, pitched in a still higher key, to which he replied, still smiling: "Yes, it does look rather as if it is going to rain; I think I had better be getting on!" "Bless the man," she exclaimed, "he's as deaf as a post; what's the use of storming at him?"

National Characteristics and Differences.

An Englishman often fails to adapt himself

to the life and habits of the American people, whereas a Scotchman, while still retaining the scent of the heather about him, soon gets into the way of the country and invariably achieves success. Dr. Lorimer, of Boston, illustrates the difference between an Englishman, Scotchman, and Irishman by the following anecdote: Each of the three was asked in turn what he would take to sit on top of St. Paul's. The Englishman replied, "Five pounds;" the Scotchman asked, "How much will ye gi'e?" while the Irishman answered, "I should take a bad cold."

Repartee.

A Rev. Dr. McC——, minister of Douglas, Clydesdale, was one day dining with a large party, including the Hon. Henry Erskine, who, on seeing the doctor help himself to the water cress quite freely, and that he also ate it voraciously, and in a somewhat gluttonous manner, using his fingers withal, determined to ridicule him for his lack of taste, and commenced: "Doctor, ye bring me in mind of the great king Nebuchadnezzar," (who ate grass like the ox.) The company were beginning to enjoy the fun, and an audible titter was enough to stir the D. D. who replied: "Ay, do I remind ye of Nebuchadnezzar? That'll be—because I am eating *among the brute beasts.*"

"From Chicago."

A friend of the Rev. Dr. P. S. Henson, the

popular Chicago preacher, not long ago found the pastor in one of the large department stores. He was leaning up against a supporting pillar in a brown study. "Why, Henson, what in the world are you standing there for?" asked the friend. "Oh," said the parson, as a twinkle came into his eye, "just putting into practice that verse in the Bible: 'All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.'"

A Brief Panegyric.

Rapin, the celebrated Jesuit, was to deliver a sermon on the festival of St. Peter, and it being late in the morning, the brethren of the religious house in which he was staying urged him, in view of the nearness of the dinner hour, to be as brief as possible in the pulpit. Whereupon the priest made the following panegyric: "Brothers, it is one year to day since I delivered before you an eulogy on the saint whose festival we celebrate.

As I have not heard that he has performed any thing new since, I have nothing to add to the encomiums which I then passed upon him." And so the congregation were dismissed with the blessing, and the brethren hastened to the refectory.

Possible Contingencies.

Lord Lyttleton once asked of a clergyman in the country the use of his pulpit for a young man he had brought down with him "from the city." "I really know not how to refuse your lord-

ship," said the resident clergyman, "yet, if the young gentleman preach *better than I*, my congregation will be dissatisfied with me afterwards, and if he preach *worse*, I don't think he is fit to preach at all."

Ministers' Sunshine.

So much has been written of the hardships of the clergyman—small salaries, unreasonable churches, mean committees, and impudent parishioners, that parents seeking for their children's happiness are not wont to desire them to enter the sacred calling. Indeed, the story of empty bread trays and cheerless parsonages has not half been told. But there is another side to the picture. Ministers' wives are not *all* vixens, nor their children scapegraces. Pastors do not all preach to empty benches. The parish sewing circle do not always *roast their pastor* over the slow fires of their tittletattle. There is no inevitable connection between the gospel and the bronchitis. As far as we have observed, the brightest sunshine is ministers' sunshine. (Dr. Talmage.)

A Priest at the Telephone.

Father—— had a telephone put into the parsonage, so that he could at all times communicate with the church, the parish school, etc. Patrick——, his sexton, and man of all works, was duly instructed in its manipulation. The day after his first lesson in the practical use of the instrument, he was dusting the pews when the familiar

tinkle of the 'phone called him to its receiver, and then listening intently he heard with pleasure the parish priest's voice asking him some question about his work. Pat in answering recalled the fact that "his reverence" was a great way off, and felt it necessary to bawl his reply at the top of his voice. Naturally the word came: "I didn't understand you, Pat."

Pat tried once more, but as he bellowed louder than before, the result was no better—at the other end, and so back came the words: "I can't hear what you are saying, Patrick."

This angered the old sexton, who, losing patience, (and his usual sharpness at the same time) soliloquized to *himself*, in a low tone: "Ah! may the devil fly away with the old fool." But Pat dropped like a leaf in autumn, when he heard the witty old priest say benignly: "*Now I hear you perfectly, Pat.*"

A Proverb with a Point.

The late Father—— was something of a wit, as the following remark will show. He had been in a polemical contest with a Bishop of the Irish Church, who had with some acrimony attacked the Roman Catholic dogma of "purgatory." In his reply, defending the Roman belief, the cleric slyly said that, much as the bishop disliked "purgatory," *he might go farther and fare worse.*

A Priest and His Bishop.

There was a certain priest who became noted

for never giving a direct "Yes" or "No" to a question. He invariably said: "That depends." His bishop once tried to beguile him into a direct affirmative or negative, by asking him at his own table whether it would, in his judgment, be lawful to *baptize with soup*, such as he was then eating at the bishop's. In reply he said: "That depends. With such soup as we are now eating at your table, my Lord, it would doubtless be *wrong*; but if with such soup as is usually served to us poor priests, and *which differs but little from water*, it might be permissible."

Offerings not Always a Sign of Popularity.

A Scottish Divine—Dr. Cook by name, once assisted in a service in one of the smallest kirks of Scotland, where the "average" collection amounted to only three pence. After the service in question the local minister remarked that "Dr. Cook must be a very popular man, as the amount of the offerings that day was actually *nine* pence." To this the visitor humorously replied: "If that's all you got, then woe is me for my popularity, for *I put the extra sixpence on myself.*"

A Pointed Rebuke.

A Scotch minister, named Downes, who had a rural parish, passing through the village with a brother minister who was to help him at a special service that evening, was accosted by a somewhat "sharp" parishioner who on meeting them remarked: "Weel, Mr. Downes, you clergymen

'ill drive the deevil outo' the country the night !''

"Yes," replied the minister, "we will; *I see you are making your escape.*" The parishioner managed ever after to omit any mention of the devil in the minister's presence. He had learned a lesson.

A Goodly Merchantman.

The Rev. Geo. Moore was riding from Aberdeen to a village in the vicinity. He was covered with a large Spanish cloak, as a fierce snow-storm was raging. He also wore a large shawl tied around the neck. These loose garments, covered with snow, and waving at times in the blast, startled the horse of a man who chanced to be on the same road. The frightened steed plunged and reared, and nearly unseated the horseman, who angrily exclaimed:

"Why, Sir, you would frighten the very devil."

To which remark the quiet parson replied: "I am glad to hear that, for *it's just my business.*"

About Dean Liddell.

The death in 1898 of Dr. Liddell, ex-Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, recalled some characteristic stories in connection with his career at the University, where he held the office of tutor, and professor. Although the Dean had a sarcastic way, he had a kind heart and was highly esteemed, not only for his learning, but for the higher

qualities of the soul. It was for his daughter that "Lewis Carroll" composed "*Alice in Wonderland*." Dean Liddell was a stern disciplinarian. Here is an example of it. After a disturbance, on one occasion, he spoke his mind shortly and sternly and dismissed the undergraduates with the words "I have spoken." He once telegraphed for a young peer who had failed to show himself before leaving at the end of a term, and sent him back to the country again after a curt word of rebuke. Another undergraduate had failed to cap him in the street. "How long have you been a member of the University, my lord?" asked the Dean. "A week, sir." "I understand; puppies cannot see till they are eight days old."

A Punctilious D. D.

A Mr. Dunlop once chanced to be present at a Presbyterian church, in a neighboring presbytery, where he saw a D. D. who on being asked to offer public prayer, for some reason declined. On the meeting adjourning, the good natured minister, without waiting for the formalities of an introduction stepped up to this mighty man, and said: "How do you do?" To this "freedom" the great man deigned no reply. Whereupon Mr. Dunlop withdrew, merely remarking to a friend, "Eh! but is 'na he a queer man, that Doctor; *he'll neither speak to God nor man.*"

Chapter XIV.

Clerical Humor in Verse.

Tell me, O tell, what kind of thing is wit,
Thou who art master of it?
For the first matter loves variety less;
Less women love it, either in love or dress;
A thousand diff'rent shapes it bears,
Comely in thousand shapes appears;
Yonder we saw it plain—and here 'tis now,
Like spirits, in a place. we know not how.

A Cowley (1618-1667.)

THE witty priest who has possessed the talent for rhyming, we will not say for making *poetry*, has frequently dropped into the easy rhyme that has lent itself most readily to the expression of the jest, the repartee, or more serious satire. The merry jingle has often danced to his merriest moods and thoughts. In spite of the fact that our specimens may not be *poetic gems* of the first water, we venture to put a few before our readers, giving the place of honor to Dean Swift, not because he was an ardent disciple of the muse, nor because his "poetry" ever soared in flights of beauty or majesty, but simply because they well illustrate his work of "rhyming his

own prose." A few other quotations from John Bunyan, Geo. Herbert, and Barham, and others will "bring up the rear."

Swift's cleverest satirical poem is supposed to be the following.

The Beast's Confession.

When beasts could speak (the learned say
They still can do so every day)
It seems, they had religion then,
As much as now we find in men.
It happened when a plague broke out
(Which therefore made them more devout)
The king of brutes (to make it plain)
Of quadrupeds I only mean,
By proclamation gave command
That every subject in the land
Should to the priest confess his sins;
And thus the pious wolf begins.
Good father, I must own with shame
That often I have been to blame;
I must confess, on Friday last,
Wretch that I was, I broke my fast;
But I defy the basest tongue
To prove I did my neighbor wrong;
Or ever went to seek my food
By rapine, theft, or thirst of blood.
The ass, approaching next, confessed
That in his heart he loved a jest;
A wag he was, he needs must own,

And could not let a dunce alone;
Sometimes his friend he would not spare,
And might perhaps be too severe:
And yet the worst that could be said,
He was a wit both born and bred.
And, if it be a sin or shame,
Nature alone must bear the blame:
One fault he hath, is sorry for 't,
His ears are half a foot too short,
Which could he to the standard bring,
He'd show his face before the king!
Then, for his voice, there's none disputes
That he's the nightingale of brutes.

The swine, with contrite heart, allowed
His shape and beauty made him proud;
In diet was perhaps too nice,
But gluttony was ne'er his vice:
In every turn of life content,
And meekly took what fortune sent:
Enquire through all the parish 'round,
A better neighbour ne'er was found:
His vigilance might some displease;
'Tis true, he hated sloth like pease.

The mimic ape began his chatter,
How evil tongues his life bespatter:
Much of the cens'ring world complained,
Who said his gravity was feigned:
Indeed, the strictness of his morals
Engaged him in a hundred quarrels:
He saw, and he was grieved to see't,

His zeal was sometimes indiscreet:
He found his virtues too severe
For our corrupted times to bear:
Yet, such a lewd licentious age
Might well excuse a stoic's rage.

The goat advanced with decent pace,
And first excused his youthful face;
Forgiveness begged, that he appeared
(Twas nature's fault) without a beard.
'Tis true, he was not much inclined
To fondness for the female kind;
Not, as his enemies object.

Then follows the moral—the "application" as
the Dean would have said in a sermon.

The lawyer swears, you may rely on't,
He never squeezed a needy client.

The cringing knave who seeks a place,
Without success, thus tells his case.
Why should he longer mince the matter?
He failed, because he would not flatter.

The chaplain vows he cannot fawn,
Though it would raise him *to the lawn*;
He passed his hours among his books,
You find it in his meagre looks.

The statesman tells you with a sneer,
His fault is to be too sincere,
And, having no sinister ends,
Is apt to disoblige his friends,
The Nation's good, his Master's glory,

Without regard to Whig or Tory.

The sharper swore he hated play,
Except to pass an hour away;
And well he might; for to his cost,
By want of skill he always lost.

I own the moral not exact;
Besides, the tale is false in fact;
And so absurd, that could I raise up
From fields Elysian, fabling Æsop,
I would accuse him to his face,
For libeling the four-foot race.
Creatures of every kind but ours
Will comprehend their natural powers;
While we, whom reason ought to sway,
Mistake our talents every day:
The ass was never known so stupid
To act the part of Tray or Cupid;
Nor leaps upon his master's lap,
There to be stroked, and fed with pap,
As Æsop would the world persuade;
He better understands his trade:
Nor comes whene'er his lady whistles,
But carries loads, and feeds on thistles;
Our author's meaning, I presume, is
A creature *bipes et implumis*;
Wherein the moralist designed
A compliment on human-kind:
For, here he owns, that now and then
Beasts may degenerate into men.

Here is an example of his rhyming on the

woes of the clergy.

The Curate's Complaint of Hard Duty.

I marched three miles through scorching sand,
With zeal in heart and notes in hand.
I rode four more to Great St. Mary,
Using four legs when two were weary;
To three fair virgins I did tie men
In the close bands of pleasing Hymen;
I dipp'd two babes in holy water,
And purified their mother after.
Within an hour and a half
I preached three congregations deaf;
Where, thundering out, with lungs long winded,
I chopp'd so fast, that few there minded.
My emblem, the laborious sun,
Saw all these mighty labours done
Before one race of his was run.
All this performed by Robert Hewitt;
What mortal else could e're go through it?

In the following lines he satirizes his fellow-men, and aims to refute the logicians.

Logicians have but ill defined
As rational, the human kind;
Reason, they say, belongs to man,
But let them prove it, if they can.
Wise Aristotle and Smiglesius,
By ratiocinations specious,
Have strove to prove with great precision,
With definition and division,
Homo est ratione praeditum;

But, for my sonl, I cannot credit 'em,
And must, in spite of them, maintain
That man and all his ways are vain;
And that this boasted lord of nature
Is both a weak and erring creature;
That instinct is a surer guide
Than reason-boasting mortals pride;
And, that brute beasts are far before 'em,
Deus est anima brutorum.

Whoever knew an honest brute,
At law his neighbour prosecute,
Bring action for assault and battery,
Or friend beguile with lies and flattery?
O'er plains they ramble unconfined,
No politics disturb their mind;
They eat their meals, and take their sport,
Nor know who's in or out at court.
They never to the levee go
To treat as dearest friend a foe;
They never importune his grace,
Nor ever cringe to men in place;
Nor undertake a dirty job,
Nor draw the quill to write for Bob.
Fraught with invective they ne'er go
To folks at Paternoster Row:
No judges, fiddlers, dancing-masters,
No pickpockets, or poetasters
Are known to honest quadrupeds:
No single brute his fellows leads.
Brutes never meet in bloody fray,
Nor cut each others' throats for pay.

Of beasts, it is confessed, the ape
Comes nearest us in human shape;
Like man, he imitates each fashion,
And malice is his ruling passion,
But, both in malice and grimaces,
A courtier any ape surpasses.
Behold him humbly cringing wait
Upon the minister of state;
View him, soon after, to inferiors
Aping the conduct of superiors:
He promises with equal air,
And to perform takes equal care.
He in his turn, finds imitators,
At court the porters, lackeys, waiters,
Their masters' manners still contract,
And footmen, lords, and dukes can act.
Thus at the court, both great and small
Behave alike, *for all ape all.*

The Old Gentry.

That all from Adam first began,
Sure none but Whiston doubts;
And that his son, and his son's son,
Were ploughmen, clowns, and louts.
Here lies the only difference now,
Some shoot off late, some soon;
Your sires in the morning left off plough,
And ours in the afternoon.

On the Vowels.

We are little airy creatures.
All of different voice and feathers;

One of us in *glass* is set,
One of us you'll find in *jet*.
T'other you may see in *tin*,
And the fourth a *box* within.
If the fifth you should *pursue*,
It can never fly from you.

Daphne.

Lose no time to contradict her.
Nor endeavor to convict her;
Never take it in your thought
That she'll own or cure a fault;
Into contradiction warm her,
Then perhaps you may reform her;
Only take this rule along,
Always to advise her *wrong*,
And reprove her when she's right,
She may then grow wise *for spite*.

The following lines, by John Bunyan, are taken from the quaint Apology for his immortal work: "The Pilgrim's Progress from this world to that which is to come."

When at the first I took my pen in hand
Thus for to write, I did not understand
That I at all should make a little book
In such a mode; nay, I had undertook
To make another; which when almost done,
Before I was aware I this begun.
And thus it was; I writing of the way
And race of saints, in this our gospel day,

Bunyan then goes on to explain the "reason

why" of the allegory. A few lines will suffice to show his estimate of his work.

This book is writ in such a dialect,
 As may the minds of listless men affect;
 It seems a novelty, and yet contains
 Nothing but sound and honest gospel strains.
 Wouldst thou divert thyself from melancholy?
 Wouldst thou be pleased, yet be far from folly?
 Wouldst thou read riddles, and their explanations?
 Or else be drowned in thy contemplations?
 Dost thou love picking meat? Or wouldst thou
 see
 A man in the clouds and hear him speak to thee?
 Wouldst thou be in a dream, and yet not sleep?
 Or wouldst thou in a moment laugh and weep?
 Wouldst thou lose thyself and catch no harm,
 And find thyself again without a charm?
 Wouldst read thyself, and read thou knowest
 not what,
 And yet know whether thou art blest or not,
 By reading the same lines? O, then, come hither,
 And lay *my book, thy head, and heart together.*

George Herbert, saint, scholar, and gentleman, was noted for that quaintness and "conceit" which is forever associated with the gallants of a court such as that of James I and Charles I. The lines on "Content" breathe a sweet trust and

cheerfulness.

Give me the pliant mind, whose gentle measure
Complies and suits with all estates;
Which can let loose to a crown, and yet with
pleasure
Takes up within a cloister gate.

* *

He that is weary, let him sit;
My soul would stir
And trade in courtesies and wit,
Quitting the fur
To cold complexions needing it.

* *

For us the winds do blow;
The earth dost rest, Heaven moves, and foun-
tains flow.
Nothing we see but means our good,
As our delight or as our treasure;
The whole is either our cupboard of food,
Or cabinet of pleasure.

Charms and Knots.

Who read a chapter when they rise,
Shall ne'er be troubled with ill eyes.
A poor man's rod, when thou dost ride,
Is both a weapon and a guide.
Who shuts his hand, hath lost his gold;
Who opens it, hath it twice told.
Who goes to bed and doth not pray,

Maketh two nights to every day.

Who by aspersions throw a stone
At the head of others, hit their own.

Who looks on ground with humble eyes,
Finds himself there, and seeks to rise.

When the hair is sweet through pride and lust,
The power doth forget the dust.

Take one from ten, and what remains ?
Ten still, if sermons go for gains.

In shallow water Heaven doth show,
But who drinks on to hell may go.

* * *

Who is the honest man ?

He that doth still and strongly good pursue;
To God, his neighbour, and himself most true;
Whom neither force nor fawning can
Unpin, or wrench from giving all their due.

Whose beauty is not
So loose or easy, that a ruffling wind
Can blow away, or glittering look it blind;
Who rides his sure and even trot,
While the world now rides by, now lags behind.

Whom none can work or woo
To use in anything a trick or sleight,
For above all things he abhors deceit;
His words, and works, and fashion too
All of a piece, and all are clear and straight.

Whom nothing can procure

When the wide world runs bias, from his will
To writhe his limbs, *and share*, not mend, the
ill;—

This is the Markman, safe and sure,
Who still is right, and prays to be so still.

On Sir Christopher Wren.

I've always considered Sir Christopher Wren,
As an architect, one of the greatest of men;
And, talking of epitaphs—much I admire his,
“*Circumspice, si momentum requiris,*”
Which an erudite verger translated to me,
“If you ask for his monument, Sir-cum-spy-
see.”

Barham. (Author of Ingoldsby legends.)

Impromptu Verse.

It is said that Dr. Jeggon, who was master of a college at Cambridge, once had occasion to punish the undergraduates for some general misdemeanor, and, because he disdained to use the penalty-money for himself, but had it used for whitening the walls, a scholar poked fun at the learned doctor in the following lines, which were duly posted up in sight of all passers-by.

Dr. Jeggon, Corpus Christi master,
Broke the scholars' heads, and gave the walls a
plaster.

Of course the Doctor happened along in due time, and, seeing the paper stopped, read, and then on the spur of the moment wrote this witty

reply:

Knew I but the wag that writ this verse in
bravery,

I'd commend him for his wit, but whip him for
his knavery.

Humorous Definition of the A. P. A.

Some years ago an Association, calling itself the American Protective Association, was formed in the United States, the object of the Society, which soon numbered its tens of thousands, being to oppose by political and other methods the tactics of certain Romanists who had placed themselves in opposition to well-known and much esteemed "American Institutions." While some such opposition was to be expected, it came to pass that a good deal of needless alarm was created in the public mind, at the excitable and exciting statements which the Anti-Roman Association scattered broadcast. At one time it was actually stated and believed that Roman Catholics were secretly storing arms in their churches, and that pretty soon we should be in the throes of a religious war. The animus in certain localities was intense and bitter, and in a very hot-bed of the A. P. A.'s the following humorous "definition" was written and circulated by the secular press.

Oh, have you heard of the A. P. A. ?

I hope you relish its sobriquet.

Listen a moment and I will tell

Of the aims of this un-American sell.

"A" is "Agitate"—to stir up strife.

This is their object, bet your life.

Religion! What evil is done in thy name?

Tolerance, charity plead in vain.

'Twas not like this in ye olden time.

When Christian charity, like new wine

Burst the bottle of sectarian "self"

And overflowed to the commonwealth.

'Twas in '76 they signed the deed,

"A Charter of Liberty"—not a *creed*.

"Life, Liberty, Happiness,"—and the rest,

But for "office" no religious test.

"P" is "Protesting," most solemn and loud;

'Gainst foreign-born Papists it *now* doth abound,

And all who belong to that church, *they* say

Are the enemies of the A. P. A.

"P" is "Politics"—don't you see?

They want to legislate you and me

Out of the country,—over the sea,

Out of the land of the brave and the free.

Political storm-clouds will roll away,

Though hotly denied by the A. P. A.

Our teeming millions who love the flag

Will not be alarm'd by "a little red rag."

Ah! little "red rag," what a stir you make!

One would think the Republic itself was at
stake.

And the only thing left was to take "a gun"
And kill off the "Romans"—one by one.

A secret maxim I think they hold;
When *rightly defined*—is as good as gold.
"Americans only on guard," they declare,
Is the solemn word by which they swear.

"*Americans*"—let the word be writ
In letters of gold; it stands for grit,
For push—and breadth,—and enterprise.
It hates all meanness, cant, and lies.

It stands for the brotherhood of man;
For freedom—and a noble plan.
No matter where you first saw light,
You are welcome here—if your heart is right.

Let bigotry, hate, and intolerance die,
Since all cannot think as you and I.
No matter—in time we may agree,
Till then—let us practice charity.

Frank J. Mallett.

On the Poet Bloomfield.

Bloomfield, thy happy omen'd name
Ensures continuance to thy fame;
Both sense and truth this verdict give,
While fields shall bloom, thy name shall live.

Kirke White.

Something for Insomnia.

"I cannot sleep at night,"
Said Mr. Blanco White.

Good Sydney Smith was near; so offers whole-
some cheer.

Says he: "I have a cure,
A harmless soporific pure."

The recipe, I now propound,
Will soon produce a sleep profound.
The ingredients all I mixed myself,
And not for praise or worldly pelf.
I'll send my printed sermons round.

They'll soon produce a sleep most sound,
For as you read a gentle calm
Will settle o'er you, fear no harm;
Read on, read on, my gentle White,
And sleep, sweet sleep will crown the night.

Frank J. Mallett.

Chapter XV.

Flotsam and Jetsam from the Tide of Clerical Humor.

A man may grow to weigh a ton,
Who feasts his mind with pungent fun,
But he who scorns its simple sway
Oft yields to crime an easy prey.

Dr. Liddon on Ecclesiastical Streets.

SPEAKING of the dominance of ecclesiastical ideas that once affected the common life of England in the past, a writer recently drew attention to the fact that "Creed" lane, and "Paternoster" row once served Dr. Liddon with an apt and humorous illustration of the "way" religious people of different names had been wont to attend St. Paul's when he was in residence. Said he: "My Anglican friends came down Paternoster Row, and my Roman friends by Ave Maria lane, and all met in *Amen Court*,"—(the residence of the Canons.)

A Marriage Fee.

A Canadian minister had just married a

couple. The registers were signed, and nothing remained but the giving and taking of the fee. The bridegroom, a strapping young fellow, asked: "How much is it?" The parson glanced at the smiling bride and slyly answered: "*Whatever you think it's worth.*" Now it should have been worth a good deal, for this girl was attractive.

"I reckon it's worth about 50 cents," said the swain, holding out two quarters. The clergyman looked blankly at the two coins, then turned to the fair one.

"I'll leave it to you, madam," he said. "What do you think it's worth?" The blushing bride reached out, took the coins, handed one quarter to the minister and put the other into her pocket! "A thrifty wife," said the Canadian, with a sigh, "is her husband's crown."

What a Sermon Ought to be.

Two young men were coming out of a theological class room one afternoon. "Yes," said one, "I entirely agree with the professor—every sermon ought to be a *work of art.*" "So do I," answered his friend, "but with a slight alteration. It seems to me that every sermon should be a *work of heart.*"

Preaching in Germany.

Dr. Tholuck in a letter to Dr. Pusey of Oxford described the present day style of preaching as follows: "Our preachers, having got rid of the

Christian doctrines by means of the higher criticism, are now insisting with much earnestness upon *the necessity of taking regular exercise.*" It was Tholuck who said quaintly "that the sermon should be practical, having the *heaven* for its father, the *earth* for its mother."

An American Minister "on" the Bicycle.

The preacher pre-eminently needs to be a man of good health. He comes to impart health and not disease; to give sympathy and not to ask it. He needs to be overflowing with vitality and good spirits so that he can infect others with health and hope. A chronically complaining and groaning pastor is a distress and abomination to his people. Out of such a miserable body good sermons cannot grow. Sermons that *moan* with a headache, or are *despondent* with dyspepsia, or are *yellow* with biliousness, cannot be agreeable and sanative to the hearers. The man that stands in a pulpit should look as though he had come out of a gymnasium and not out of a hospital.

The bicycle is a gymnasium on wheels. It gives, not indoor exercise in heated, dust-laden and impure atmosphere, but outdoor exercise in God's own gymnasium with its green floor, pure crisp air, and vaulted blue roof. A high-grade machine—and it pays to buy the best—costs \$100; *to learn to ride it costs about six bumps and ten bruises.* If it costs as much as a horse to buy, it costs less to keep, as it eats only a little oil and

rubber cement, and occasionally a nut or bolt, and at longer intervals a rubber tire.

Rev. J. H. Snowden.

Preparation of Sermons.

Dr. John A. Broadus, the well known Baptist divine of Louisville, Ky., in speaking on this subject which is ever of interest to the preacher, said: "If the preacher does not labor in the preparation of his sermons, then the people must labor to hear him."

A Clerical Story about Gladstone.

There is a story told in "Musical Opinion" by Dean Pigou in connection with Mr. Gladstone. The deceased gentleman happened to attend the Chapel Royal on July 18, 1886, the day after resigning office on his failure to carry a Home Rule Parliament. The anthem was: "It is enough, O Lord; now take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers." Lord Sydney remarked on the coincidence after the service, adding to Dr. Pigou: "You may be sure that the only person who did not notice it was Gladstone himself." Many similar coincidences might be placed on record. One remembers the instance of the organist who played as a voluntary: "And grant a leader bold and brave," the Sunday after Lord Beaconsfield's death.

A Vicar's Unconscious Joke.

The following is from an article by S. F. L.

Bernags on "Humors of Clerical Life" published some time since in the Cornhill Magazine.

In the matter of the choice of texts, a curious thing happened to a curate, whom I knew, on his return from his wedding tour. He only reached home on Saturday evening, when he found a letter from his vicar asking him to preach the next morning, as he knew he had a sermon, not yet preached in the parish, which would fit in with the Advent course of sermons then being given. The sermon was on the Parable of the Ten Virgins. The curate, who preached written sermons, did not look at this particular one till the next morning, half an hour before service, when, to his horror, he found that his text was, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh," and indeed this was the constant refrain of the sermon. It was too late to change, and so he put the best face he could upon it. The congregation may have forgotten the sermon, but they have not forgotten the text.

Good Security.

Patrick Forbes, Bishop of Aberdeen, had lent an unlucky parson different sums of money until his patience had run out, but the ever needy brother still pressed for just one more loan, offering this time "to find security." The Bishop thereupon decided to do the favor and said: "Where is your security?" To this plain question the borrower replied with confidence: "Almighty God is my

bondsman in Providence. He is the only security I have to offer." This strange reply touched the heart of the good bishop, and he let him go about his business, saying: "It is the first time such a security was ever offered me, but you shall have the money, *and may Almighty God, your bondsman, see that it does you good.*"

Marriages Made in Heaven.

Archbishop Leighton never married, and while he held the see of Dunblane he was of course a constant source of speculation to the match makers of the local Vanity Fair. One lady, whose mental soundness may be questioned, came to call upon him; and it was evident that *little* as her mind might be, she "had something on it." Soon she came to the object of her visit which was to inform him (poor man) that she had been much exercised over a dream—or rather "a revelation from heaven." On being kindly questioned as to the precise nature of this "revelation," she at last managed to insinuate that it was intended by heaven that he should *marry* her. What the feelings of the prelate were can be better imagined than described. He managed to survive the shock that to any recluse and scholar under like conditions must naturally accrue, and then said that doubtless these intimations were not to be despised, but inasmuch as the designs of Heaven were but imperfectly explained, he would wait to see whether any similar communication

should be made to *himself*, and that *when it happened*, he would be sure to let her know. This master stroke of ready wit proved successful, and she went away satisfied and saved from humiliation, which might have grieved the poor soul.

Luther's Exegesis.

A question was asked whether the words of Jer. 20:14, beginning "cursed be the day wherein I was born, etc" were sinful. To which Luther replied: "We have sometimes to *waken up* our Lord God with such words, or he would not listen to us."

An Unpalatable Truth.

A minister known for his homely style once choose for his text a striking passage from the book of Psalms: "I said in my haste all men are liars." "Ah!" said he by way of introduction, "you said that in your *haste*, David, did you? If you had been *here*, you might have said it at your *leisure*."

Melancholy a Sign of Weakness.

Only second-rate hearts and minds are melancholy. When we become like little children our very playfulness tells that we are *seeing deep* when we see that God is love in His works as well as in Himself.—Chas. Kingsley.

Crime and Punishment.

A Bishop conversing with the Archbishop of Cambray on the code of criminal law in France

approved, in contradiction to the Archbishop, of capital punishment, and said in maintaining his argument that men guilty of certain offences "were not fit to live." To this the Archbishop replied: "But, my friend, you do not reflect that they *are still less fit to die.*"

A Bishop's Artifice.

The American Bishop is sometimes beset with over-ambitious "Vestries," or "Committees," who are anxious to obtain clergymen who should command large salaries— for nothing— or next to nothing. One of my friends, who is a Bishop, was once asked to send to a little suburban "Mission" with good prospects a "strong" clergyman to minister to those somewhat genteel and fanciful people. After a moment's thought the Bishop said he had just the man for the place, who would temporarily take charge and do good service. On being asked about the gentleman in question, he added that it was "the General Missionary of the Diocese." This did not seem to please the Committee, and one said something about their dislike of "a mere Missionary." After a moment's pause, the good Bishop said: "Well, if that arrangement is not satisfactory, I will send *you* the Archdeacon." This looked better and the Committee went its way rejoicing, and no one was present to tell them that they had been mildly duped—that the "General Missionary" was coming just the same, but with another title tacked

on—the Archdeacon.—F. J. M.

“Pigeon Paley.”

It is said that Pitt recommended the great writer and divine, Paley, for a bishopric. “What,” said George III., “Pigeon Paley, No! No-No!” The reason he called him Pigeon Paley was from his famous apologue about property, which he described thus: “If you should see a flock of pigeons in a field of corn, and if instead of each picking where and what it liked, you should see ninety-nine of them gathering all they got into a heap, reserving nothing for themselves but the chaff and refuse, and keeping this heap for one, and that the weakest and perhaps the worst pigeon of the flock, you would see nothing more than what is every day practiced and established among men. Among men you see the ninety and nine toiling and scraping together a heap of superfluities for one, and this one, too, oftentimes the feeblest and worst of the whole set, getting nothing for themselves all the while, but a little of the coarsest of the provisions which their own industry produces.” This bit of writing cost Paley a mitre, George III. seeing in himself the feeblest and worst pigeon, and revenging himself accordingly.

Do Missions Pay?

It is related that a certain Bishop met an English sportsman in Calcutta. The former was visiting the native Christians under his care, and

the latter was after large game. In the conversation between the two, the sportsman remarked that he had met no native Christians in his travels, and did not believe that Missionary work was producing any effect. "But," said the bishop, "have you seen any tigers?" The Englishman replied: "Oh, yes, hundreds of them." "Well," responded the bishop, "I myself have travelled extensively through India, and I have seen hundreds of native Christians, but I have not seen one tiger; shall I therefore say there are no tigers in India? It is probable that we have both seen just what we were looking for."

Dean Pigou on "the Coat Clerical."

According to the Dean the cut of one's coat is of some importance—at least to him who makes it, if not to him who wears it. The Dean tells of his own experiences with a tailor: "The coat which young men at that time affected, both in Church and State, was very long in the skirt, reaching down to the ankles. The tailor proceeded to take my measure down to my boots. 'I do not want,' I said, 'my coat so long.' Looking benignly at me, he replied: 'In this establishment, sir, we always cut a gentleman's coat according to his religious persuasions.' 'Very well,' I rejoined, '*my religious persuasions, as a Moderate Churchman, are about two inches below my knee.*' Some time after, having occasion to have a new coat, I went, on my brother's recommendation, to Messrs. Hill

in Bond street, more in the army and navy than in the clerical line. The foreman was by religious persuasion a Presbyterian. 'I do not want,' I said, 'my coat longer than this in the skirt.' 'No, sir,' he replied, tape in hand, and evidently exercised in mind. 'Why,' I said, 'what is the matter with it?' 'Well, sir, if you do not mind my saying so, I think I should call your coat a little Papal!'

A Single Obstacle.

The London "Church Review" is responsible for the following item which, while blunt, is to the point. It seems that a certain notable 'vert from the Church of England had an interview with Cardinal Vaughan, and after some conversation on ordinary topics, his Eminence asked: "What is the obstacle which prevents more of the Anglican clergy from joining the true Church? The reply was doubtless unexpected, but there was no hesitancy as his caller remarked coolly: "Your Eminence, the chief obstacle is yourself."

Plainness of Speech.

Archdeacon Sinclair contributes an interesting article in *Goodwill* on the Archbishop of Canterbury. A characteristic instance of his Grace's plainness of speech is narrated as follows: Once Dr. Temple was principal of the Training College at Kneller Hall, Hounslow. One afternoon, when the principal was gardening, a deputation of the young schoolmasters attended him: "Sir," they

said, "we have a grievance." "What is your grievance?" said the principal. "Sir," said the spokesman, "we have no social advantages in the neighborhood, we are not invited out, we are not entertained as gentleman." "May I tell you why?" asked the principal who had scant sympathy with social ambition. "Because you're not."

A Canny Scotch Divine.

Sir James Macintosh, the philosopher, invited his friend Rev. Dr. Parr to take a drive, in his gig. As they went along the horse became restive and almost unmanageable. This somewhat alarmed the D. D. who said to his companion: "Gently, gently, Jimmy, pray don't irritate him; always soothe your horse, whatever you do, Jimmy. You'll do better without me, I am certain; so let me down, Jimmy, let me down." Having descended from the gig, the parson's views of the situation seemed to undergo a change, for he said: "Now *touch him up*, Jimmy, never let a horse *get the better of you*; touch him up, conquer him, don't spare him, and now I'll leave you to manage him—I'll walk home."

A Little "Previous."

It is related of Rev. John Skinner that having relieved a poor Scotch woman who had begged an alms, she gratefully remarked: "Oh, Sir, I houp that ye and a' your family will be in heaven the night." To this "pious" wish the parson responded: "Well, I am *very* much obliged to you;

only you need not have just been so particular as to the time."

Humorous Pulpit Illustrations.

Dean Ramsay, in his "Pulpit Talk," speaking of Whitefield's open air preaching says: "I remember a traditionary anecdote in the West of England, of a *tour de force* made use of by the orator in these outdoor addresses, and which he had often repeated. In preaching upon the discipline and self denial of the saved, he wished to represent to his hearers that to secure this end they must enter the strait gate and pursue the narrow way; that salvation was not to be won except with labor and self denial adding: "You seem to think it a very simple matter; you think it quite easy. Oh, just as easy as for me to catch that insect flying past me, (grasping at a fly, or supposed fly) then after a little pause he opened his hand, saying in solemn tones, '*but I have missed it.*'"

Walk Circumspectly.

Rev. Matthew Wilks who was a successor of Whitefield at the Moorfield Tabernacle, London, once caused considerable merriment during the sermon by using a homely simile to illustrate how Christians should "walk" in this miserable and naughty world. Said he: "Walk circumspectly, my friends, *like a cat upon a wall of broken glass.*"

How to Hold a Tired Congregation.

A clergyman in Lincolnshire not long ago preach-

ed a long sermon from the text "Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting." His parishioners endured the long drawn out discourse for one whole hour but then their patience "ran out," and *they* silently "slipped out" in little knots; but this could not go on for long without the preacher discovering the exodus. When he *did* observe the little plan, he wittily remarked: "That's right, Brethren, as soon as you *are weighed* pass out." That sentence chained the rest to their seats, but did not stop the long winded parson, who prosily held out to the last.

Dr. Guthrie Visiting.

A story is told of Dr. Guthrie, the great Edinburgh divine, who, when making pastoral calls, happened to reach the door of a burly Irishman, who at first seemed anything but pleasant. The doctor made an effort to enter for a little chat, but was met with the polite remark: "You can't come in here, you're not needed nor wanted." "My friend," quoth the Doctor, "I'm only visiting round my parish to become acquainted with my people." "It don't matter," said the son of Erin. "you shan't come in here; if you come in here, I'll knock you down," and, lifting the poker, he "presented arms." Nothing daunted the heroic Presbyterian drew himself up to his full height, and not waiting to "higgle" over the business in hand said: "Come, now, that's too bad; would you strike a man unarmed? *Hand me the tongs, then*

we shall be on equal terms." That brought the Irishman round, and he admitted that "the minister was a square man" and bade him come again.

A Flow of Spirits.

A good old Irish landlord, who was poor, consulted with his parish priest about his son's prospects, when the latter said: "There's Master R—if he would only marry an heiress—" "Bedad" said the old knight, "Father Patrick, there's sense in that." The priest thereupon shook his head.

"And why should'nt he?"

"Because" returned the cleric, "he's never out of one scrape till he's in another. And then he's so *captious*; if he were in heaven, he would pick a quarrel with St. Peter."

"It's all a flow of spirits," said the indulgent parent,

"*It's a flow of spirits* that causes it generally," said his reverence.

Various Kinds of Successful Ministers.

Speaking before the Diocesan Convention of Mississippi, in 1899, Bishop Thompson said: "Eloquence is a good thing. But some men, whose whole ministry has been strikingly blessed, were very dull preachers. Learning is a good thing, but wonderful work has been done, and is done, by men who do not know a Hebrew letter, and cannot translate a verse of the Greek Testament.

Some men have worked parishes to a height

of distinction by strength of brain, some by strength of heart, and I have known it done *by strength of legs*, though it is on record that the Lord delighteth not in them."

The Bishop of London on "Clerks."

That bright and popular English journal, "Church Bells," has the following to tell of the Bishop of the British Metropolis.

Dr. Creighton's reputation for playful irony is rapidly growing. On a recent occasion when the Bishop was delivering an address at the City of London College, and was, of course, wearing the episcopal gaiters, he had been speaking of the aptness of the English clerk to persuade himself, once outside his office, that he was not a clerk, and to forget his business altogether. Dr. Creighton made a sudden pause at this stage and, with a downward sweep of his hands, exclaimed, "Now, no one could ever make a mistake about *me*, and whenever a Bishop *looks at his legs* he must be reminded of his business." There is really more than meets the eye in these semi-jesting remarks of the Bishop, and it is possible that the lesson he no doubt intended to convey had reference to the conceit displayed by many young men, when they get away from their offices or other places of business in which they find employment, to unduly exalt their positions.

The Shortest Sermon Extant.

The shortest sermon ever preached was

perhaps the sermon which Dr. Whewell was fond of repeating from the text, "Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward."

The sermon occupied barely a minute in delivery, the following being a verbatim report: "I shall divide the discourse into three heads: 1, Man's *ingress* into the world; 2, His *progress* through the world; 3, His *egress* out of the world.

"Firstly, his ingress into the world is naked and bare.

"Secondly, his progress through the world is trouble and care.

"Thirdly, his egress out of the world is nobody knows where.

"To conclude—

"If we live well here, we shall live well there.

"I can tell you no more if I preach a year." Then he gave the benediction.

The Patron-Saint of Scotland.

Dean Hole, in his interesting "Memories," tells the story of an ecclesiastic, the Archdeacon of *Calcutta*, who explained at a dinner why St. Andrew was chosen as the patron saint of Scotland. It was St. Andrew's Day, and all went merry as a marriage bell. The Archdeacon was in a humorous vein and said: "Gentlemen, I have given this difficult subject my thoughtful consideration, and I have come to the conclusion that St. Andrew

was chosen to be the patron-saint of Scotland because he discovered *the lad who had the loaves and fishes.*"

His True Vocation.

In the days of the fox hunting parson, when spirituality was at a low ebb in the church of England, the Bishop of Exeter (D^r. Phillpott) called to account several of those parsonic sports, who might not be turned out of their livings, and yet perchance were amenable to their father in God who begg'd them to walk more circumspectly. In "Kings of the Hunting Field" the author tells the following story of the good Bishop who met one such parson at the house of a mutual friend. "I am told, my lord, that you object to my hunting," said the parson. "Dear me, who could have told you so," answered the Bishop. "What I object to is *that you should ever do anything else.*"

Theological Colleges and Their Defects.

A discussion in "The Times" on Theological Colleges and their defects may have drawn from the primate (Archbishop Alexander) the following epigrammatic warning in his address to the General Synod of the Church of Ireland: "Spiritual meat is good; spiritual milk is good. The theological college meat is apt to be tinned, and the theological college milk is apt to be peptonized."

The Eleventh Commandment.

"*Success*" revives this old but good story of Archbishop Usher:

Washed ashore from a wreck off the coast of Ireland, and almost destitute of clothing, he wandered to the house of a church dignitary and asked for shelter and aid as a brother clergyman.

"How many commandments are there?" inquired the other, thinking to detect an impostor.

"I can at once satisfy you that I am not the ignorant impostor you take me for," replied the archbishop; "there are eleven commandments."

"No," was the sneering comment, "there are but ten commandments in my Bible. Tell me the eleventh and I will relieve you."

"There it is," said the archbishop, "'a new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another.'"

One Benefit of Disestablishment.

Apropos of the ritual controversy, miscalled a "crisis" in the Church of England, they have again quoted the bon-mot of the late Archbishop Magee, who years ago said: "I am beginning almost to long—I have been some time looking—for disestablishment. It will very nearly drown us—but it will *kill the fleas*."

An American Bishop's Signature.

Bishop Doane addresses his colleagues with whom he is on especially familiar terms, by the names of their dioceses, instead of their surnames, and in correspondence frequently makes use of his own and other titles. It is related that on one occasion he wrote a letter to another Bishop, and in signing it used the term, "William of Albany," instead of his name. His correspondent promptly replied to the letter, and in his answer said: "It is really too bad, Bishop, that you are not of the western diocese of your State instead of Albany. If you were, you might very appropriately sign yourself, 'Buffalo Bill.' "





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